

Contemporary Social Movements in India

A Study of Their Genesis, Processes and Implications

A Thesis Submitted
In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

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to the

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
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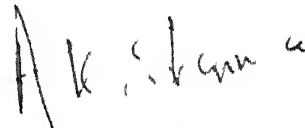
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*Dedicated to
My Parents
As a token of
Love and Regards*

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis 'Contemporary Social Movements in India A Study of their Genesis, Processes and Implications', submitted by Abhash Chandra Panda in partial fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, is a record of bonafide research work carried out by him, under my supervision and guidance. The results embodied in the thesis have not been submitted to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

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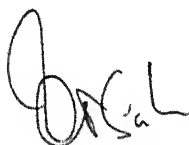
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CONTENTS

Page No

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

SYNOPSIS 1 - v

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION 1

1 1 The Concept of Social Movement 1

1 2 Classification of Social Movements 5

1 3. Theoretical Developments of Social
Movements in the West 9

1.4 Emergence of New Theoretical
Paradigms in the West 19

1 5 Movement Studies in India 26

1.6 Development of Social Movements in
Contemporary India 32

1 7. Purpose of Our Study 36

CHAPTER II METHODS AND PROCEDURE 37

2.1 Sociological Methods 37

2 2. Some Movement Studies in India A
Methodological Report 39

2 3 Methods and Experiences in the Study 43

CHAPTER III WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS IN INDIA 60

3 1 Theoretical Developments of Feminism
in the West 60

3 2 Development of Women's Organisations
in the West 64

3.3 Development of Women's Movement in
India: An Overview 67

3 4 The Role of Organisations in Women's
Studies of India 72

3 5	Saheli A Case Study	79
3 6.	Major Activities of Saheli	87
3 7.	Saheli's Future Course of Actions	96
CHAPTER IV	ECOLOGY MOVEMENTS IN INDIA	100
4.1	Forest Legislations in India and its Impact on the Environment	105
4 2.	Factors Leading to Ecology Movements in India	109
4.3	Western Ghats, the People and the State of Ecology	111
4 4	The Appiko Chaluvali	115
4 5	Techniques Adopted in Appiko Chaluvali	120
4.6	The Sample Villages: Salkani and Gubigadde	121
CHAPTER V	CIVIL LIBERTIES MOVEMENT IN INDIA	131
5 1	The State, Civil Society and Theory	134
5 2	What is Civil Liberty	139
5 3	Civil Rights Movements in the United States	141
5 4.	Development of Civil Rights Movement in India	144
5 5	Lokayan: A Case Study	148
5 6.	Singrauli and the Activities of Lok-Hit Samiti	162
CHAPTER VI.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	177
APPENDIX - A	'APPIKO' SONGS	192
APPENDIX - B	AN INTERVIEW WITH PROF RAJNI KOTHARI	200
BIBLIOGRAPHY		203

SYNOPSIS

Contemporary Social Movements in India A Study of Their Genesis, Processes and Implications

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy by Abhash Chandra Panda to the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, India

The seventies of India saw grassroot micro-movements such as the ecology movements, the women's movements, the dalit movements, the movement for civil liberties and democratic rights and various movements of religious and ethnic minorities. As the nature of these movements were different from the earlier movements, there was a need to explain these movements from the perspective of concrete goals and well defined strategies. The present thesis makes an attempt in studying them from an "identity-oriented" paradigm.

Chapter one deals with the various theoretical developments in the study of social movements in the West as well as in India. The social movements of the seventies in the West were not responses to economic crises or breakdown. Therefore, the classical theories were felt to be inadequate in explaining these movements. This resulted in the development of the "resource - mobilization" paradigm in the United States and the "identity-oriented" paradigm in Western Europe. The new paradigms consider the occurrence of social movements as normal and the participants to be rational beings. The "resource-mobilization" paradigm believes that the formation

of social movements depend on changes in resources, organisation and opportunities for collective action but fails to explain the processes through which collective actors create identities and solidarities they defend

However, the three-fold objectives of "identity-oriented" paradigm, which explains the self-perception and identity of the actors, the problem of the Other against which their self-identity is formed, and the cultural totality that forms the arena of struggle, defines the very essence of a social movement.

The problem of social movements was a neglected subject in India till the early seventies. During the freedom struggle the movements had a clearcut target of attack. After independence, the absence of such a clear target led to the diversification and proliferation of social movements in India.

The poor, the deprived and the minorities in India feel that various developmental programmes of the government have made them more marginalized. This feeling has been expressed by them in the form of grassroot micro-movements. The present thesis encompasses within its scope three of these movements: women, ecology and civil liberty. What seems common to all these movements is the question of identity.

Women want to demonstrate their own identity in terms of some activities which they feel they can do on their own.

In so far as the ecology issue is concerned the people are trying to assert their identities with nature, since nature now appears to them as a gradually vanishing aspect of their world. Similarly, the assertion of the demand for a civil society articulates people's pressing concern for their identity as the free citizens of a democratic world.

Chapter two deals with the methods and procedures of data collection. The data collected is basically qualitative however as a way of complementing the above data some quantitative methods are also applied. The methods used are open-ended interview schedules for the inmates, informal interviews with the organisers, case studies of the inmates, informations from the key informants, formal interviews with government officials, methods of observation by staying in the field and data from secondary sources to understand the macro dimensions of the movements.

In chapter three, we have discussed the problem of women by taking up a case study of Saheli, an autonomous women organisation, carrying out their activities in Delhi. The significant features of this organisation is that membership is open only to woman, though male-help is allowed in many respects. There is no hierarchy at the organisational level. Their main aim is that women themselves organise and lead the movements and give priority to fight against oppression, exploitation, injustice and discrimination against them.

The issue of ecology has been discussed in chapter four. Over the years, due to increased forest exploitation, the forest communities have experienced a progressive loss of control over their habitat. Recently people have responded to this threat to their survival by starting off ecological movements in various parts of the country. Inspired by the 'Chipko Andolan' of the Garhwal region, the people of Uttara Kannada District have launched the 'Appiko' movement. We have made a case study of Parishara Sanrakshana Kendra (PSK) which is spearheading the movement in the region.

Chapter five deals with the issue of civil liberty. In India movements of civil and democratic rights are consequences of social, economic and political oppressions as well as human indignities. In recent years, a divergence of perspectives among various civil liberty groups is noticeable. It indicates their move towards a new political activity for the future. In India the grassroot initiatives in the form of a non-party political process have shown ways. Their main demand is to create a non-institutional domain where the practices of civil society are accountable. This aspect has been discussed by taking up a case study of Lokayan (Delhi) and its action-group Lok-Hit Samiti (Singrauli).

The concluding chapter reflects on the substantive findings of the study. It shows that the theories of classical tradition are inadequate to explain the genesis, processes and implications of many, if not all, contemporary social

movements of India. A comprehensive theory of these movements need to incorporate the perspective of the actor's identity and its cultural totality.

The significant features of these contemporary social movements are as follows. Firstly they start from the grass-root level and show national and global concern. Their efforts are voluntaristic. Secondly, they divert their attention from the traditional economic/industrial system to cultural grounds. Thirdly, capture of state power is not their ultimate goal. Fourthly, the organisations, which are involved in carrying out these movements, do not have a rigid hierarchy. Fourthly, they believe in a non-party political process. Finally, it can be said that the effectiveness of these movements are yet to be realised because of their recent origin. The thesis ends with the discussion of its potential limitations and suggestions for future course of research.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Concept of Social Movement

The study of "movement" conveys an image of narrative, i.e., something is in motion from one state to another. The English word "movement" derives from the old French verb moveir, which means to move, stir or impel, and the medieval Latin movementum.

If we go to the version of Oxford Dictionary the English usage of "movement" designates 'a series of actions and endeavours of a body of persons for a special object'

A different and now obsolete usage of this term was to denote certain 'liberal', 'innovatory' or 'progressive parties or functions' as in parti du mouvement (French) or "movement party" in early nineteenth century Britain¹

The earlier definition has been predominant in Britain since the early nineteenth century. This is evident from the fact that the early usage and conceptualization of social movement can be seen as a "mechanistic" response to the need for historical and social explanations of the contemporary world.

The term "movement" has often been interchangeably used with such words as "organization", "association", "group"

1. Paul Wilkinson, Social Movement (London, Pall Mall, 1971).

and "union" This poses the following question: what precisely distinguishes a social movement from other forms of group activity such as unions, pressure groups and parties? What essentially, constitutes a social movement?²

To salvage from the diversity and confusion of conceptualizations of social movement, Paul Wilkinson, at this point tries to give a working concept which could be adequately deployed and related to empirical phenomena by the combined, and often collaborative, efforts of historians, sociologists, social anthropologists, political scientists and psychologists.

According to him, the following characteristics may constitute as a precondition of social movement: (i) A social movement is a deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution or withdrawal into 'utopian' or 'community', social movements are thus clearly different from historical movements

(ii) A social movement must evince a minimal degree of organization, though this may range from a loose, informal or partial level of organization to the highly institutionalized and bureaucratized movement and the corporate group.

(iii) A social movement's commitment to change and *raison d'être* of its organization are founded upon the

2. Ibid., p. 15.

conscious volition, normative commitment to the movement's aims or beliefs, and active participation on the part of the followers or members.

Therefore, according to Wilson³ social movement can be defined as a conscious, collective and organized attempt to bring about or resist large-scale change in the social order by noninstitutionalized means

To elaborate this concept he breaks it into five parts and feels that by means of this definition, social movements can be distinguished from related phenomena

(i) Social movements are organized collectivities Here he feels that, behind every movement, there should be some form of organization having some division of labour and some recognized hierarchy of rights and responsibilities that participants have evolved.

(ii) Social movements are large in potential scope Here he feels that the social movements should have the potential to grow to a membership numbered in thousands if not millions.

(iii) Social movements use uninstitutionalized means to achieve their objectives and this is how social movements are different from political parties, interest groups and trade unions The latter are examples of large-scale collectivities but they use more institutionalized means to achieve their objectives than the social movement.

3 T H Wilson, Introduction to Social Movements, (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p 8

(iv) Social movements are not necessarily limited to the achievement of the self-interested objectives of their members, while the specificity of goals makes interest groups a distinctive phenomenon. Unlike interest groups, social movements don't have limited objectives in the sense of restricting their aims to particular categories of people.

(v) Social movements are conscious, purposive attempts to bring about change. This is a very important aspect of social movement as it is distinguished from more aggregate action.

Charles Tilly⁴ describes the above definitions to be within the Weberian tradition. He also points out that these definitions, although clearer than most of those one encounters in the literature of social movements, and conveys the usual meaning of the term. In Weberian parlance, a group of people somehow orient themselves to the same belief system and act together to promote change on the basis of this common orientation. Thus the standard questions become: How do such systems of beliefs arise and acquire followings? How do they constrain their adherents? How do they and the groups which form around them change, routinize, disappear?

Students of social movements who are serious about origin and mobilization of social movements have, however, gone outside the Weberian framework for their explanations

4 Charles Tilly, From Mobilization to Revolution, (Reading, Mass. Addison-Wesley, 1978), pp 39-40

We shall elaborate on this while discussing the theories of social movements.

1.2. Classification of Social Movements

Classification is considered to be a necessary prerequisite of analysis for a particular phenomenon. One of the most important reasons behind classification is to simplify reality. Typologies help in translating the qualitative and unsystematic concepts into quantitative and operational one.

Blumer⁵ classifies movements into three categories namely general social movements, specific social movements and expressive social movements.

He views that general social movements take the form of groping and unco-ordinated efforts. They have only a general direction, toward which they move in a slow, halting, yet persistent fashion. As movements, they are unorganized, with neither established leadership nor recognized membership, and little guidance and control. Blumer includes labor movement, the youth movement, the women's movement and the peace movement in this category.

A specific movement on the other hand, he views, 'is one which has a well-defined objective or goal which it seeks to reach'. It also develops a recognized and accepted leadership and a definite membership characterized by a "we-consciousness".

5. Herbert Blumer, "Social Movements," in Barry McLaughlin's (ed.) Studies in Social Movements: A Social Psychological Perspective (The Free Press, New York, Collier Macmillan Limited, 1969), Rpt. from New outlines of the Principles of Sociology. (ed.), A.M-Lee, (1951).

According to Blumer, specific social movements are primarily of two types: reform movements and revolutionary movements.

A reform movement seeks to change some limited areas of the existing social order. It derives its support from the prevailing code of ethics. As a result it ensures its claim on existing institutions. It also tries to develop a public opinion favorable to its claim.

On the other hand, revolutionary movement has always a broader aim and thereby it seeks to reconstruct the entire social order. It challenges the existing mores and proposes a new one. It faces difficulty in carrying out its operation within the existing institutions. It endeavors to establish its strength by bringing the people, who consider themselves to be exploited, into its fold.

Expressive movements don't seek to change the institutions of the social order or its objective character. On the other hand, their tensions are released in some type of expressive behavior. Religious movements and fashion movements are two such movements cited as expressive movements by Blumer.

Revival movements and nationalistic movements are two other categories cited by Blumer, where we find the characteristics of religious movements and fashion movements merged in it.

Wilson⁶ describes that the literature on social movements abounds with typologies. These, he describes, "range from

6. T.H. Wilson, op. cit., P. 15.

being purely descriptive in nature (reactionary, utopian, escapist) to those which have been deduced from a body of theory. Here he points out that, the worth of a typology is measured by the extent to which it (1) excludes no known empirical cases; (2) provides empirical indicators for its properties; (3) remains within the conceptual boundaries of the author's definition of social movements; (4) relates meaningfully to the theory of social movements which the author tries to develop; (5) builds upon the work of previous research in the field; including incorporation of the best features of previous typologies. There are only three typologies which meet these criteria.⁷ They are value-oriented, power-oriented and participation-oriented movements proposed by Turner and Killian.

Value-oriented movements are those in which the principal support for the movement is derived from a conviction of the worth of the program for change. Here the movement becomes a movement of principle.

Power-oriented movements are those which have as their primary orientation the acquisition of power, status, or recognition for their members. In this kind, attainment of power is seen as an end in itself.

Participation-oriented movements are centered around the provision of membership gratification mainly through

7. Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian, Collective Behavior (Englewood Cliff, N.H., Prentice Hall Inc., 1957) pp. 327-329.

self-expression. This type of movement was further subdivided into (i) passive reform movements (ii) personal status movements and (iii) limited personal movements.

The main problem with the above categories, however, is that these categories have no consistent ordering principle by which the types are distinguished.

Aberle⁸, a social Anthropologist in his study of America's Navaho Indians tries to formulate typologies of social movements. His typologies are classified along two dimensions, i.e., the locus of change sought and the amount of change sought, and the cross-classifications of these two dimensions give rise to four types of social movements. They are as follows:

(i) Transformative movements: Giving the example of Millennial movements in this category, he says that the main aim of these types of movements is total change in the social structure.

(ii) Reformative movements: Like Blumer, Aberle also views that reformative movements aim at a partial change in supraindividual systems. The main objectives of this type of movements are to fight against inequities and injustices suffered by categories of people.

8. David Aberle, The Peyote Religion Among the Navaho (Chicago: Aldine, 1966) This idea has been extracted from T.H. Wilson's Introduction to Social Movements, pp. 23-27.

(iii) Redemptive movements. This type of movements aim more at change in individuals than the system. The problems are examined purely on individualistic terms. The salvation Army, Soka Gakkai (Japan) are some of the examples of these type of movements where emphasis on individual characters are given importance.

(iv) Alternative movements: The main aim of these types of movement is to bring some changes in individuals and has similarity with the redemptive movements.

From the above analysis, we find out that the main idea behind Aberle to bring out the typologies of social movements is to focus on collective attempts to overcome relative deprivation.

1.3. Theoretical Developments of Social Movements in the West

The analysis of social movements has become increasingly important in contemporary sociology, but it continues to suffer from an insufficiently clearly defined object. For some, social movements comprise a descriptive category, that is, a collective action to achieve some change in the social order. Others point out that this definition is not objective, but refers naturally to certain general approaches. It is important that we should attempt to define more precisely the object of our interest, focussing on a more general mode of sociological analysis.

Charles Tilly⁹, while dealing with a theory of collective action analyzes the work of classical theorists like Marx, Durkheim, J.S. Mill and Max Weber.

The Marxian analysis, Tilly writes, "generally traces collective action back to solidarity within groups and conflict of interests between groups, considers the solidarity and the conflicts of interest to reinforce each other, and bases both of them on the organization of production."¹⁰ Here, Marx puts more emphasis on the collective rationality of political action.

On the other hand, Durkheim "presents a society strained by a continuous struggle between forces of disintegration (notably rapid differentiation) and forces of integration (notably new or renewed commitment to shared beliefs)¹¹. From the above dichotomy, Durkheim derives the models of three kinds of collective action, which can be called routine, anomic and restorative collective actions.

Routine collective action renews shared belief routinely. Anomic collective action on the other hand increases as the society's shared beliefs are shaken and the restorative collective action has the capacity to bring the society back into the safe area.

9. Charles Tilly op. cit., pp. 12-14.

10. Ibid., p. 14.

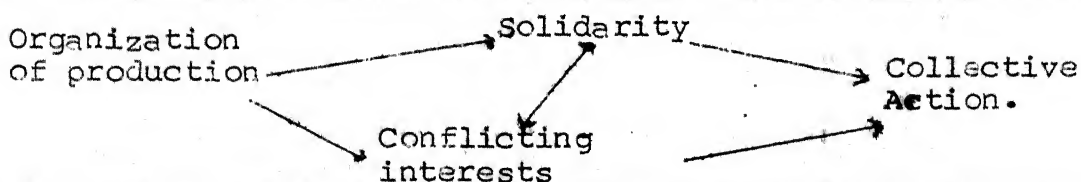
11. Ibid., p. 18.

According to J.S. Mill, collective action helps in the pursuit of individual interest. 'Game theory, some forms of voting analysis, some approaches to formal organization, many treatments of public goods, and a few analyses of power illustrate the relevant work within this tradition.¹²

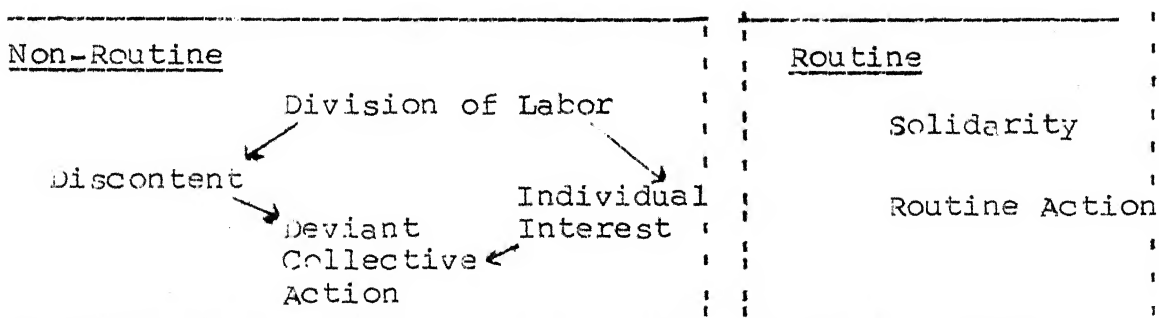
The Millian ideas appear in the models of collective choice and collective goods in the contemporary society. In the writings of Max Weber we find that the authorities play an important role. The constitutional authorities entailed by the group sometimes play a traditional role, sometimes on their traditional- legal designation and sometimes on the basis of their charisma. Weber also says that the authorities' actions or the actions of the collective actors is either oriented towards deviant beliefs or towards the beliefs of general acceptance. Therefore one could find that routinization and diffusion are complementary to each other.

We find a general logic on the notions of collective action by the above thinkers in the diagrammatic representation by Tilly given below:

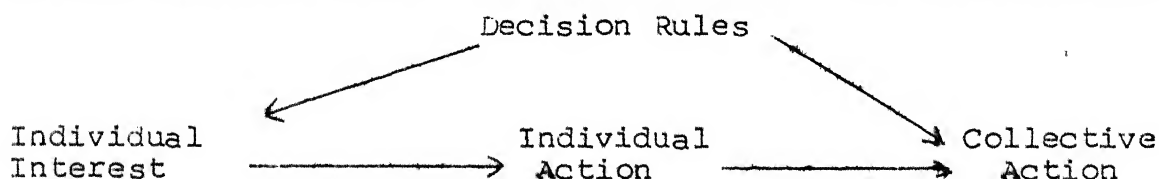
Marxian



Durkheimian



Millian



Weberian

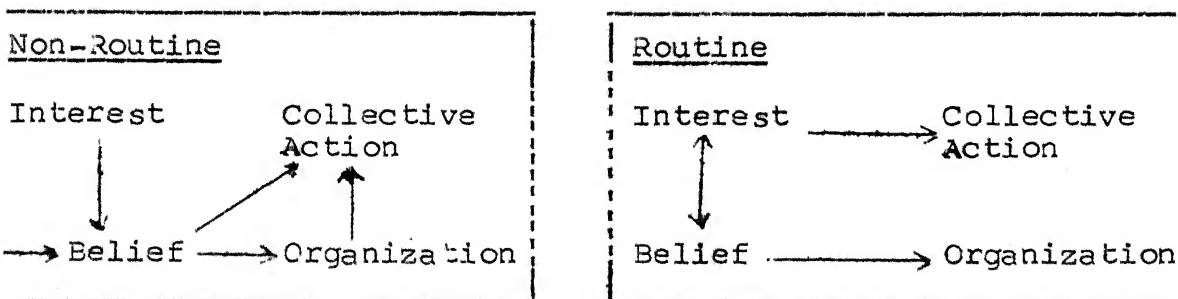


Fig. 1.1

Source: Competing Analyses of Collective Action, Fig. 2.1, Tilly, op. cit., p. 15.

After analyzing the theories of above classical theorists, Tilly found that these theorists have failed to give a convincing explanation of why an individual joins a collective action, or of what the connections are between individual and group interests.

Apart from the studies of collective action by the classical theorists, if we try to analyze the "classical approach" to the study of social movements, we would be able to show that such social theories have important consequences for understanding the nature of contemporary social movements.

Historical Materialism

According to classical historical materialism, human history conceives of successive modes of production. Therefore, social conflicts within a particular mode of production are analysed in terms of their class basis. The social class, according to historical materialism is defined in terms of the means of production within a particular mode of production. In the modern capitalist system, it is the capitalist mode of production which has penetrated all spheres of life.

Therefore, in the modern society, the radical social movements involves in the complete breakdown of bourgeois culture and institutions.

Look for the social (class) basis is the key approach of historical materialism's approach to social movements. In this context, the new radical protests are branded either as "neo-romantic" or "neo-populist". "Romanticism is an anti-rationalist and subjectivist approach to the social world, while populism is characterized by hostility to the status quo and anti-intellectualism."¹³

13. Klaus Eder, "A New Social Movement?", Telos, No. 52, Summer, 1982, p. 6.

The romanticists make attempts to seek an alternative to both capitalism and socialism, whereas the populists make an attempt either to participate in a given institutional structure or to establish a lost institutional context that guarantees the autonomy of the people. Depending on the social location of the counter types, "they are either reactionary (i.e., carried by political elites) or revolutionary (i.e., carried by those excluded from power)"¹⁴ The petty-bourgeoisie, therefore, becomes the class base of populism.

Orthodox historical materialism allows for only two real classes: capitalists and workers; the remaining strata are historically and culturally contingent and therefore must be analyzed separately and individually according to economic and political "conjunctures"¹⁵ In this context petty-bourgeoisie are not classes in the strict sense. This ambivalence stems from their uncertain relation to the means of production in contemporary capitalist society.

Habermas, another exponent of historical materialism uses the term 'organization principle' instead of 'mode of production' in his analysis of developmental stages.

After making the above change, Habermas developed two distinct modes, that is, structural orientation and an action theory to explain change and development.

14. Ibid., p. 9.

15. Ron Eyerman, op. cit., p. 72,

According to structural orientation, change is defined in terms of structural strain between the productive forces and the relations of production. The action perspective, on the other hand, explains change in terms of the interaction and confrontation between competing groups. Thus 'social conflict is structured by the normative framework evolved at a particular historical instant, a structure which remains relatively autonomous from the particular level of the development of the productive forces' ¹⁶. Here he argues for a model of modernization that stresses the tension and strain of differentiated action systems, which points to universalistic processes of adaptation rather than collective subjects. Here, universalism becomes the central criterion for judging social movements. Therefore the important factors of social movements are the visions, aims and goals as opposed to their potential for resistance and retreat.

Structural functionalism

Parsons is considered to be one of the pioneers of structural-functional school. He looks at social conflict exclusively from the point of view of its function and dysfunction for modernization. Therefore it is inferred that social movements inform the system about the social reality which has to be controlled and also guarantee the adaptability of institutional system which in the end turns

16. Ibid , p 76

social conflict into 'mere problem indicators for modernizing elites.'¹⁷

At this point, we can say that, Parsons' criteria for judging and explaining social movements, are derived from the basic components of modernization: differentiation (development of autonomous action units), adaptation (more adaptive capacity on the part of the system), inclusion (more participation and less exclusion because of race, age, sex, or property-ownership) and value generalization (values guiding legitimate action become increasingly more abstract and flexible).

In contrast to classical historical materialism, Parsonian evolutionary theory does not define contemporary social movements within the prism of a left-right framework. According to Parsons, social movements are new in the sense of being the products of strains particular to 'higher' forms of social evolution.

Following the footsteps of Parsons, Smelser¹⁸ makes an attempt to integrate his typology of social movements into a general theory of action. He feels that, it is the kind of a belief under which behavior is mobilized which distinguishes collective behavior from other social patterns, and it is the generality of this belief which distinguishes one type of collective episode from another.

17. Ibid., pp. 74-75.

18. N.J. Smelser, The Theory of Collective Behavior (New York, 1962).

Smelser accepts straightforwardly the hierarchy of the four functions as Parsons has conceptualized it, putting 'value-' on top, and 'situational facilities' at the bottom of the hierarchy. 'Norms' and 'motives' occupy the intermediate levels. This hierarchy implies some logical relations: change on top necessarily involves changes at the bottom, and not necessarily the vice versa.

If we elaborate the above four concepts we find that (i) at the level of situational facilities, the belief is that reconstitution can be effected through the modification of technology and the environment, e.g. machine breaking during the early stages of the Industrial Revolution.

(ii) At the level of mobilization (motives), individual agents are responsible and can be successfully attacked.

(iii) At the level of norms the belief is that only through the modification of social rules will the threatening situation be removed, e.g. The Women's Suffrage movement, the Prohibition movement.

(iv) At the level of values, we find the cause of dissatisfaction is rooted in the basic values of society. The best example in this regard is the case of religious movements.

According to Smelser, then, the highest form of collective action is embodied in value-oriented movements that tries to "restore, modify or create values in the name of generalized

belief Such a belief necessarily involves all components of action, that is, it envisions a reconstitution of values, a redefinition of norms, a recognition of the motivation of individuals and a redefinition of situational facilities "19

In his analysis, Smelser uses variables like adaptability, social structures, structural strain, growth and spread of generalized belief, precipitating factors, mobilization of participants for action and social control

After analyzing the theories of Parsons and Smelser on social movements, we find the following limitations in their analysis: (i) By constructing the system of social action Parsons and Smelser have tried to give a general sociological answer They introduce time only at a descriptive level

This theory can be explained historically but it does not explain the process of the definition and redefinition of an action system In the words of Eder, 'it can be applied to history but it does not explain historicity '20

(ii) This type of theory also considers collective behavior as a nonrational or irrational response to change As a result it precludes any examination of innovations or learning on the part of collective actors.

Apart from Smelser's structural functionalist model, the theoretical paradigm which were dominant until the 1970s were

19 Ibid , p. 137.

20 Claus Eder, op cit , p 12

the social-psychological tradition of the Chicago School, the exponents of which were Turner and Blumer. We have briefly explained about their idea of social movements earlier on.

At this juncture, there was clearly the need for new theoretical paradigms in the West.

1.4 Emergence of New Theoretical Paradigms in the West

Cohen presents a succinct account of how a pair of modern theoretical paradigms has come into being as a consequence of the social thinkers' realization of the essential inadequacies of the classical theories in the explanation of contemporary social movements. The following passage neatly captures the history of this transition:

The inadequacies of the classical tradition became obvious in the sixties and seventies when massive social movements emerged in the United States and Europe. The development of movements in politics characterized by pluralists as democratic and in civil societies with a multiplicity of voluntary associations belied the mass-society version of the collective-behavior paradigm. So, too, did the fact that actors in the New Left hardly conformed to the image of anomic, fragmented, underprivileged, and irrational deviants. Nor was the Durkheimian model (structural strain/generalized belief/short circuiting) adequate to explain the timing, cognitive character, conduct, or goals of movement actors. The movements of the sixties and seventies were not responses to economic crises or breakdown. They involved concrete goals, clearly articulated general values and interests, and rational calculations of strategies. Clearly, a new theoretical approach to the analysis of social movements was needed. In the United States the theoretical response involved the emergence of the "resource-mobilization" paradigm. In Western Europe the "identity-oriented" paradigm became the dominant approach.²¹

The Resource-mobilization Paradigm:

According to the resource-mobilization theorists, two most important pre-requisites to mobilize collective action are sophisticated organizational forms and modes of communication. They also stress that there is the need of variables like organization, interests, resources, opportunities and strategies for large-scale mobilizations.

Within this paradigm we find different orientations which ranges from Olson's pure rational-actor approaches, McCarthy and Zald's organizational entrepreneurial approach to Lilly's political conflict model.

Olson in his book 'The Logic of Collective Action' says that the rational individual contributes for collective action if provided with incentives. In other words the collective social action lies outside the rational self-interest of the individual.

On the other hand, McCarthy and Zald believe that social movements depend on changes in resources, organization and opportunities for collective action. In this context they feel that large-scale formal organizations are needed for collective mobilizations.

According to Lilly's power conflict model of collective social action, power is defined as the strength of group's interests that prevails over the interests of others with whom it is in conflict.

In this context, Tilly considers groups as the main actors in collective conflicts. Here then, collective identity, consciousness and solidarity become very important. Out of this, there emerges a common interest in the context of conflicts and negotiations.

Cohen has summarized, what the resource-mobilization theorists share in common, in the following

(i) Social movements must be understood in terms of a conflict model of collective action (ii) There is no fundamental difference between institutional and noninstitutional collective action (iii) Both entail conflicts of interest built into institutionalized power relations, (iv) Collective action involves the rational pursuit of interests by groups (v) Goals and grievances are permanent products of power relations and cannot account for the formation of movements, (vi) This depends instead on changes in resources, organization, and opportunities for collective action, (vii) Success is evidenced by increased material benefits, (viii) Mobilization involves large-scale, special purpose, bureaucratic, formal organizations 22

Many resource-mobilization theorists have recognized some of the unique aspects of contemporary movements that is, deliberate choice of decentralized structures, grassroots participation and federated national organizations.

The field of new social conflicts is created by the system and its contradictory requirements. Though resource-mobilization theory can help in understanding how different elements converge in activating specific forms of collective action, it fails to explain why action arises and where it is going.

The resource mobilization approach also avoids macro level analysis and tends to reduce every collective action to the political level and that way it misses the cultural orientation of the merging social conflicts.

Identity-oriented paradigm:

The identity-oriented paradigm posits an alternative approach and thereby make collective actors and their forms of struggle the starting point of the analysis of society and to enter directly into the interpretation of the projects and stakes of social movements.

The theorists who argue in favor of this paradigm stress that the approaches stressing the primacy of structural contradictions, economic classes, and crises in determining collective identity are inappropriate contemporary collective actors.

Pizzorno and Alain Touraine are considered to be the two main exponents of this paradigm.

Pizzorno's²³ analysis is based on a pure identity model. He believes in the logic of collective identity formation which involves direct participation on the part of the actors and the exclusion of representation. He identifies this logic of collective action as expressive. Once the new collective identity becomes recognized as part of a new, expanded system of representation, action shifts from the

23 Pizzorno's pure identity model has been summarized in by Cohen, op cit , p. 691

expressive to the instrumental, and representation replaces direct forms of participation

The main problem with Pizzorno's pure identity model is that, contemporary actors are not only concerned with affirming the content of a specific identity but also with the formal elements involved in identity formation

Alain Touraine²⁴, on the other hand, provides the comprehensive theoretical framework for the identity-oriented paradigm. His paradigm involves three dimensions: (1) the consciousness of the actor, his/her self-perception and identity, (2) an Other against which self and identity is formed and (3) a situation, a framework for action in which actors define themselves through collectively 'defining the situation'

According to Touraine, action refers to the capacity of human societies to develop and alter their own orientations, that is, to generate their normativity and objectives. Therefore, social movement refers to cultural orientations as well as social relations, opposed social projects and contested structures of domination.

In this context, Touraine's approach on social movements are based on the following: (i) He rejects all versions of the breakdown thesis to account for social movements.

24 Alain Touraine, The Voice and the Eye, (New York. Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 61.

(ii) He does not consider social movements as abnormal occurrences

(iii) The cultural orientation of a particular society involves both social conflict and social relations of domination

Therefore, in Tsurumi's analysis of social movement we find that: (i) Seizure of state power is not the inscribed goal, (ii) is distinct from strategic or instrumental action and (iii) is a normal functioning of society and occurs for its health

Tsurumi talks of a different type of social conflict, whose stake is the social control of the main cultural patterns, that is, of the patterns through which our relationships with the environment are normatively organized

While talking of the unity of social conflicts, Tsurumi is of the view that, one can define all types of conflict including social movement if the following three aspects of analysis are combined:

(i) Political pressure and collective pursuit of interest are always completed by expressions of a nonactualized, virtual social movement.

(ii) Social movements are limited on the one side by Homo Economicus and, on the other, by Big Brother.

(iii) The third limit of social movements is the intervention of an absolute State as agent of historical

development and not as a center of the institutional system

Touraine presents the above analysis in the following figure

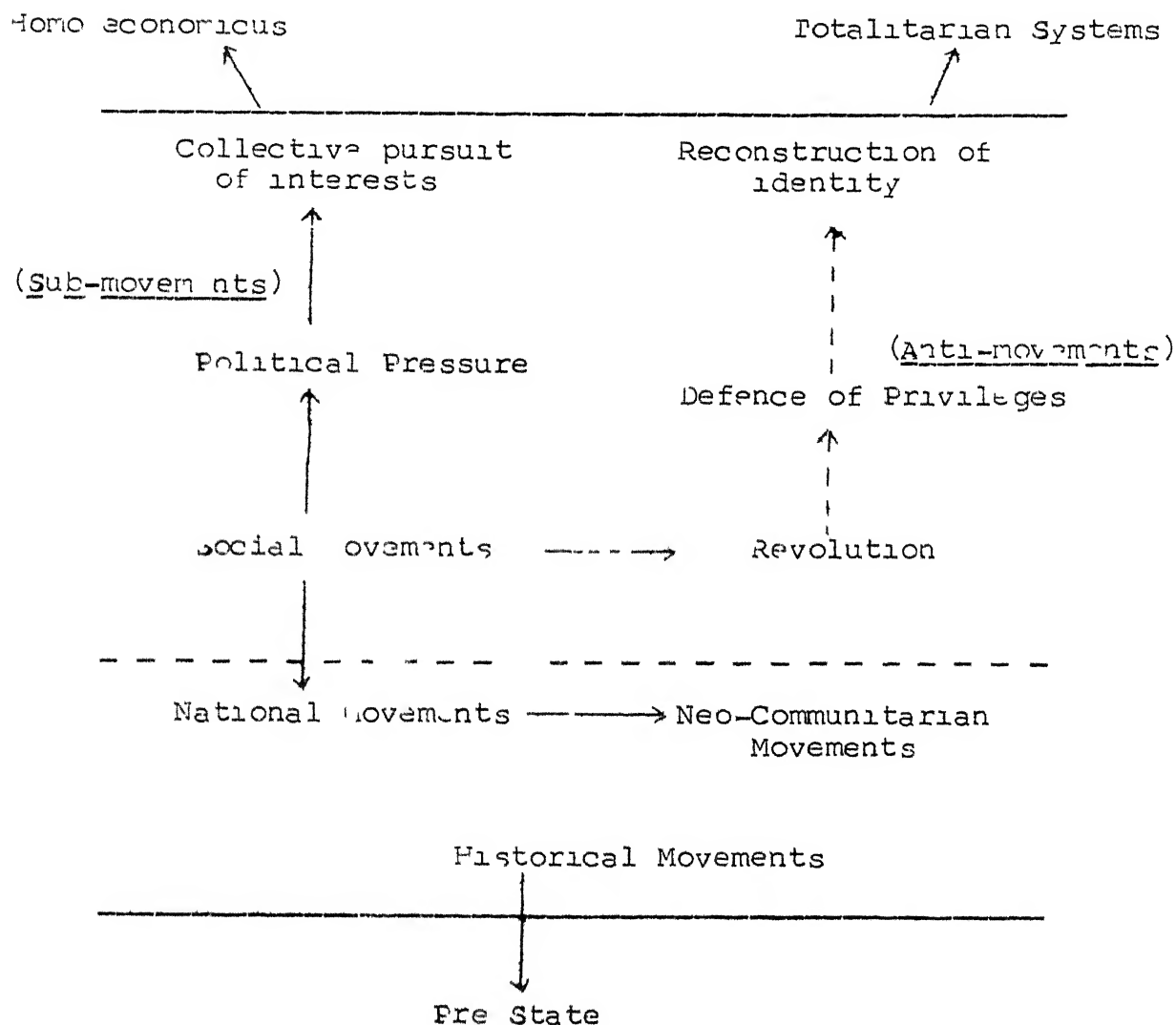


Fig 1 2

Source: Alain Touraine's "An Introduction to the Study of Social Movements", Social Research (Vol. 52, No 4, Winter 1985), p 764.

The above presentation indicates the three processes of transformation of a social movement into more instrumental action, into more integrative and communitarian movement, and

into historical, especially national movements. And it draws the line beyond which the influence of a social movement is destroyed, in the first case by economic rationality, in the second by the logic of a totalitarian system, and in the third case by a State which is essentially an agent of economic development.

1.5 Movement Studies in India

Logendra Singh²⁵ in the preface of his recent book writes that, "Studies of movements in particular have marked a new phase of development in Indian sociology as these seek to analyse social reality as "process" or as "formation". In the chapter on 'social processes' he writes, 'the sociological study of social movements, hitherto a concern of historians, was an indicator of new tensions in the world view of sociology.'

K. Gommán²⁶ in the trend report on social movements published by the Indian Council of Social Science Research brings forward the reasons why in the earlier days the studies on social movements were neglected in India, in the following lines:

the universities and scholars were limited in number and the tradition of research was not very strong. Those who did research concentrated on analyzing

25 Logendra Singh Indian Sociology: Social conditioning and Emerging concerns (New Delhi, Vistaar Publication, 1986) p. 63

26 Gommán, T. K. (1985), "Social Movements" in Survey of Research in Sociology and Social Anthropology 1969- 1979 Vol. II a Project sponsored by ICSSR (New Delhi: Stavahan 1985) p. 136

structures rather than processes. For instance, the pre-Independence areas of research until recently were Caste, Family and Village. This resulted in the neglect of several crucial areas, social movements being one of them.

Describing the movement studies as ex post facto enterprise, Oommen opines that almost all movements during the freedom struggle in India were subsumed under the national liberation movement. However, he says, during the third decade of Independent India (1968-77), studies on social movements came to be an important preoccupation of social scientists. But after Independence, the absence of an overarching enemy was felt and therefore perceptions about the "evils" to be attacked led to (a) divergence in the targets of attack (political authority, economic exploitation, cultural domination) and (b) varying perceptions about the immediate targets of attack. This led to the diversification in the nature and proliferation of social movements in India.

My discussion will be limited to the movement studies, where systematic attempts have been made in the conceptual issues like definition, classification, genesis, ideology, identity, organization and leadership, internal dynamics and social consequences. In this context the analysis of social movements by MSA Rao, P N Mukherjee and T K. Oommen are important.

MSA Rao²⁷ makes distinction between three types of social movements, that is, reformist movement, transformative

27 M S A Rao (ed.), Social Movements in India (New Delhi: Manohar Publication, 1984) pp 1-17

movement and revolutionary movement. At the level of social change, reform movement brings about partial change and counter-revolutionary movement brings about middle level structural changes. On the other hand, revolutionary movement brings about radical changes in the totality of social and cultural systems. The classification of M. S. A. Rao's social movements are quite similar to that of Abner, about whom we have discussed earlier.

At a conceptual level, the explanation of social movement by Rao lies in the theory of relative deprivation and reference group behavior.

Common does not agree with Rao's analysis as in his opinion Rao's analysis lacks exclusiveness and exhaustiveness. According to Common a typology of social movements could be evolved by making a methodological distinction between 'the problem related to the scale of the movement and the issues related to the units and levels of observation'.²⁸

P. N. Mukherjee²⁹ defines social movement as a collective mobilization seeking change of structure either through institutional or non-institutional means. On the basis of above definition, he classifies three types of social movements, that is, accumulative movement, alternative movement and transformative movement. As these movements

28 T. K. Common, op cit, pp. 84-85

29 P. N. Mukherjee, "Social Movement and Social Change Towards a Conceptual Classification and Theoretical Framework", Sociological Bulletin, 1977, 26 (1)

are based on the quality of change, he subsumes, accumulative movement brings change within the system whereas alternative movement is geared to create new structure and transformative movement's aim is to replace the existing structure by another

According to Mukherjee, only revolutionary means suits movements and in this respect Naxalbari and Gandhian movements are two such movements which fall in the category of social movements. Among the rest of the movements, most would qualify only as quasi movements

Commens describes the above position as untenable as it does not explain the following questions: (i) what is that type of movement which has intra-systemic change as its goal but adopts revolutionary means to achieve it? (ii) If movement pursues systemic changes through institutionalized and even non-violent means how will we characterize it?³⁰

I K Commens in his analysis of social movements suggests that it is the dialectic between historicity (past experience), social structure (present experience) and the urge for a better future (human creativity) which provides the focal point for analysis of social movements.³¹

He again suggests that, if there will be a situation of strain in the society, then, the social movement as

30 I K Commens, op cit, pp 85-86

31 Yrghendra Singh, op cit, p 66

institutionalized collective action will be met through
(i) the emergence of a charismatic leader (ii) crystallization
of a new ideology and (iii) establishment of a new organization
In his opinion, then, in a situation of strain, there will be
the emergence of three types of social movements namely
charismatic movement, ideological movement and organizational
movement

In the above report he also makes certain remarks on
the limitations on his above typologies (i) The above
typologies are based on componential analysis of movements
As a result it gives importance to one or another component
at a time and thereby neglects the relevance of others (ii)
The second limitation is shown towards the organizational
movements. If it is referred at the level of processes
rather than at the level of structure, then at the ideological
level the pattern of leadership should be different from
that of the usual organizational leadership

The Indian sociologists who have tried to study social
movements from a Marxist perspective, have shown their
interest in the study of peasant and agrarian movements.
A R Desai, D N Dhannagare and Kathleen Gough are three such
sociologists who have worked on the above social movements

A R Desai's 'Social Background of Indian Nationalism
(1954)', is a masterpiece in the study of the Indian national
movement from a sociological perspective. His study was
based upon Marxist theory of historical materialism. He has

focused upon 'the nature of the state', its class character and its social and economic policies which in a macroscopic sense brings upon specific historical manifestations of social movements and revolts in society. These features also define the potentiality of social movements and the long term sociological perspective from which their structure and outcome should be evaluated.³²

Dhanagare³³ and Gough³⁴ formulate similar typologies,

far as the goal, ideology and organization of the agrarian movements are concerned. They are (i) restorative movement, (ii) religious movements, (iii) social banditry, (iv) mass insurrections and (v) terrorist vengeance. The main purpose of giving such typologies by these sociologists are: (a) to designate all conflicts in society as class conflicts and (b) to label consciousness rooted in religion, caste, language, etc., as false.

The main problems with the Marxist analysis of social movements in India are the following. (1) they have hardly shown any susceptibility towards the significance of tradition or values in the formation of class structure and (2) the categories such as 'class', 'labour relations', etc. in the mode of production are used regardless of concrete social processes, their contents and interlinkages.

32 Yogendra Singh, op cit, p. 67.

33 D N Dhanagare, Peasant Movement in India, 1920-1950 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983)

34 Kathleen Gough, "Indian Peasant Uprising", Economic and Political Weekly (special number), 1974.

From the studies of social movements in India we, however, find out that the two key concepts which were introduced into sociological analysis by movement studies are those of historicity and the dialectic of social process ³⁵

1.6 Development of Social Movements in Contemporary India

We have mentioned earlier that all movements during the freedom struggle were subsumed under national liberation movement. As a result, soon after independence, the absence of an over-arching enemy was felt. And therefore the targets of attack were civilised.

However, if we analyse the post-independence social, political, economic and cultural situations of our country, we find that a crisis of national identity was felt by the Indian masses in the late sixties.

In the political field, with the breakdown of the old Congress Party, there was a fragmentation of national politics. This gave rise to the formation of many regional parties and ethnic and religious movements.

In the economic sphere, there were large scale unemployment, growing inflation and acute food shortages. This resulted in widening the gap between the poorer and the richer sections of the society. The concept of nation-building, planned development, socialist pattern, national self-reliance, etc. proved to be a myth for the masses.

35. Yogendra Singh, op cit, p. 65

Soon after independence, the country was governed by a conensive middle-class elite who were the intellectual and political heirs of colonialism. The ideas of these bureaucratic and technocratic ruling elite were responsible for creating a gap between the established middle classes and the masses. The existing theories were unable to explain how a plural society like India can be managed in an age of mass politics and democracy.

Kothari³⁶ feels that four possible factors are responsible for such a debacle. They are as follows:

(i) In most of the third world countries the spirit of nationalism emerged out of a reaction to imperialism. Kothari considers this as 'negative' to begin with because the very idea continued even after Independence. In India, however, this was corrected to some extent by Gandhian impact.

Although the ideological appeal of the movement for India had a somewhat broader social scope, its essential basis was the middle class only.

(ii) The basic Indian identity has remained as civilizational, not statist. As a result, the durable concept of a 'nation-state' is missing.

(iii) The borrowed concept of a 'nation-state' from the post-medieval, 'scientific' West which is monolithic,

36 Rajni Kothari, "Need for a New National Movement", Hindustan Times Sunday Magazine (December 14, 1986), p. 9

highly monic and homogenous in nature, seems to be alien to pluralist and fundamentally open and democratic ethos of Indian civilization

(iv) With the adoption of a State from our colonial ruler, which is becoming more hegemonical, exploitative and distant from its own diverse peoples, culture and identities, the ethos of nationalism has been further fragmented

On the one hand, the programme for 'Caribi Hatao' national self-reliance, planned development, high technology etc., are going on. But, on the other hand, there are the struggle-oriented grassroots micro-movements which vary from the ecology movement, the women's movements, the dalit movement, the movement for civil liberties and democratic rights to various movements of religious and ethnic minorities. The above social movements are an effort to scale the grassroots. In some respects these movements have national as well as global dimensions.

These movements are detached from the national politics of parties and elections. Their efforts are voluntaristic.

These movements shift their attention from the traditional economic/industrial system to cultural grounds. They stress upon the cultural orientation of social development based on a new conception of nature and man.

The present thesis takes within its scope only three of the above described movements: women, ecology and the civil liberties.

In contemporary Indian society, women are still considered to be socially deprived and discriminated against. In recent years, there have been various sociological investigations into the social problems of women. Such investigations have brought to light new insights. One phenomenon that particularly throws new light on this problem is the development of autonomous women's organizations, which has occasioned the rise of a new consciousness of equality. The fundamental question that this development has brought to the forefront is that of communicating with 'another' without denying the differences by power relations.

The seventies of India witnessed the emergence of grassroot ecology movements searching for a new harmonious relationship between man and nature. This movement not only challenges the logic of the relationship between man and nature, it necessitates a reexamination of the relationship between man and his own nature. Here the basic question concerns what place 'nature' has in the constitution and preservation of human life itself.

The civil liberties movements, which became more active after the emergency era make demands for the domain of the "civil society". They are concerned with the democratization of structures of everyday life and focus on forms of communication and collective identity at the grassroots.

17. Purpose of Our Study

What seems common to all these three movements is the question of identity, they are all grappling with the problem of identity in their own ways. Women want to demonstrate their own identity in terms of some activities which they can do on their own. In so far as the ecology movements are concerned people are trying to assert their identities with nature, which appears to them as a gradually vanishing aspect of their world. The gradual destruction of nature threatens the survival of the poor and the destitute citizens. Similarly, the assertion of the demand for a civil society articulates people's pressing concern for their identity as the free citizens of a democratic world.

When these movements are appreciated in terms of the problem of identity, it seems pertinent to embark on a sociological study of them by adopting an "identity-oriented" paradigm. This is what is undertaken as a methodological procedure in the present study of women's movements, ecology movements and the civil liberties movements.

None of these movements is confined to the minorities alone. Rather, they all appear to assume the shape and character of national movements, and even of global concern.

Part of this project is also, on the one hand, to study the goals, interests and strategies of the above movements, and on the other, to examine the identity of the actor, the definition of the opponent and the very cultural totality that constitutes the field of conflict.

Chapter 11

METHODS AND PROCEDURE

2.1 Sociological Methods

In the introductory chapter we have tried to discuss about the nature of theoretical developments and its applications in the study of social movements. However, there is a need to analyse the state of methodological developments in the study of sociology in general as well as social movements in particular. This will give us an idea how various research methods have helped us in studying and explaining social movements in India as well as abroad.

As sociology is an empirical science the issues of its methodology need to be discussed on the basis of philosophical assumptions about scientific method. At the beginning of twentieth century the issues of nomothetic versus idiographic approaches have been debated from empiricist, idealist and neo-Kantian positions in Germany. In the United States the controversy over statistical versus case studies from logical positivists and pragmatist conceptions of scientific method became the focus of attention in the nineteen thirties.

More recently, the perennial controversy over quantitative versus qualitative methods have gained impetus. Thus, the question of quantitative and qualitative methods has been confounded with polemics over "scientism" versus "historicism" and the contemporary tendency to identify objectivity and rational empirical inquiry with what are

taken to be the methods of the natural sciences

However, most social scientists seem to be inclined to a moderate position where they find that qualitative and quantitative methods are complementary to each other rather than being a point of controversy. In this respect, a combination of methods or triangulation is advocated. Though, in recent years, various other strategies like abandoning method, integrative method and ethical-speculative methods in research methodologies have been advocated, the method of triangulation has gained more popularity.

Triangulation is broadly defined as the 'combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon'.¹ In social science, Campbell and Fiske² used the method of triangulation for the first time in 1959 by developing the idea of multiple operationalism. The distinct advantages in triangulation are the following: (i) By using more than one method, the data gets a better exposure for cross-validity and reliability. (ii) By using more than one method the weaknesses in each method is compensated by the counterbalancing strengths of another. (iii) By the method of triangulation an effort is made to integrate fieldwork and survey methods.

Keeping above things in mind, we have tried to study our fields through qualitative research supplemented by some

1 Norman K. Denzin, The Research Act, 2nd ed (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978) p. 291

2 Donald T. Campbell and D. W. Fiske, "Convergent and Discriminant Validation by the Multitrait-Multimethod

quantitative research we shall elaborate on this aspect while describing our experience in the field

2.2 Some movement studies in India: A Methodological Report

Research methods and techniques of data collection play an important role in conducting research in any kind of studies in social science. In this respect, we can say that both qualitative research as well as quantitative research need to have appropriate applications. In our studies of contemporary social movements like women, ecology and civil liberties, we feel the necessity of multiple techniques in analysing their genesis, process and impact on the society. Before analysing our experience in the field we would like to reflect upon various studies on social movements who have tried to explain those movements through the application of various techniques.

(1) P. N. Mukherjee's Study of Naxalbari movement

The study of P. N. Mukherjee's Naxalbari movement is about the Naxalbari peasant uprising in the late sixties and early seventies. As it was a revolutionary agrarian movement, a unique experience of its kind, it was quite but obvious on the part of researchers to study it from a traditional framework of research tools.

The methods adopted by Mukherjee and co in studying the movement was qualitative in nature. The tools of research applied by the researchers give an impression that the data was basically of 'narrative-descriptive' type. The following

methods were adopted in collecting data from the field

(a) Data from secondary sources were obtained at the initial level

(b) Open-ended interviews with the key informants were taken and then these data were cross-checked with interviews with co-activists and the persons who were the targets of the activists

(c) First-hand reports obtained from being a participant observer. So participant observation was another tool of research applied in the study

(d) Interviews with various other informants with the condition that their identity will not be revealed

The above sources of data gives an indication of qualitative research

(11) Rajendra Singh's study of Nijai Bol and Land-grab movements:

Rajendra Singh has tried to make a comparative study of two peasant movements i.e., Nijai Bol (1946) and Land-grab movement (1970). Though the nature of the two movements are of similar in nature, yet these have taken place at two different periods of history. Therefore, Rajendra Singh has made a comparative analysis with the application of Mill's logical method of agreement and difference. In brief, we can say that Singh has followed the following methods and procedure for his study:

(a) Historiographic methods to reconstruct the structural situation and field study methods to record the sequence, processes and modalities of change

(b) Secondary sources in support of variables like nature of property rights, land distribution pattern, population structure etc

(c) Brief case studies of the rebels and rebellions in support of the movement

(iii) T K Oommen's study of Bhoodan-Gramdan movement

T K Oommen in his study of Bhoodan-Gramdan movement in Rajasthan collected data on the basis of the application of multiplicity of tools of research. As he had to collect data from a wide range of facts about material conditions, attitudes and value-orientations of the people, the dynamics of human actions manifested in various events. Therefore Oommen employed the following methods of data collection.

(a) structured interviews for enumeration and frequency data,

(b) Informal interviews to understand institutionalized norms,

(c) Observation to describe specific incidents and events and analysis of relevant documents,

and (d) Unstructured interviews to understand the historical background

From the above studies, we see that the tools of research methods used by various researchers in the study of social movements are of multiplicity of methods. The data collected in the study of social movements where the scepticism is posed towards the functioning of the policies of the government and its allied structures, the people who are involved in such movements have always shown a defensive attitude. They give their consent in answering the researcher's questions only if they are ensured that their identity is not revealed. In this case, the key informants play a vital role.

In our study we have applied multiple methods considering the following things in mind:

(i) The nature of research is qualitative in nature, however, for the authenticity, validity and reliability of data, some quantitative methods like open-ended interview schedule, structured interviews, etc., are being applied.

(ii) As the medium of communication becomes very difficult because of a different language spoken by the interviewers, we have preferred to adopt interview schedule instead of questionnaire.

(iii) We have adopted the technique of informal interviews with the key informants.

(iv) To understand the macro dimension of the movements, we have collected data from secondary sources.

(v) Though the duration of our stay in the field was not very long as it would have been, we have tried to play the role of a participant observer instead of a formal researcher. In this context we have tried to be present with them rather than present to them.

(vi) To create a rapport among the group, sometimes informal meetings, get together and community meetings were also organized.

Though, from the above classifications, an impression is created that research methods in various forms made our research a smooth and steady affair, in actual practice, at times, several subjective factors, acted adversely.

2.3 Methods and Experiences in the Study

Having discussed the major methodological issues and considerations in the above sections now we present our own approach in studying the three social movements under examination. This section will also show in brief our difficulties in obtaining data pertaining to these movements and the complexities of issues involved.

(1) Women's movements: The Saheli experience.

In the introductory chapter we have mentioned that in the contemporary social movements, the problem of identity is the basic issue through which the common people, the minorities and the concerned citizens are fighting for

In this context, we would like to focus upon the women's organisations which are fighting for a separate identity of women.

After the literature survey, we inferred that the main thrust of women's movements is taking place among the urban middle class women, who, through the autonomous women's organisations are fighting for their rights. We therefore, were looking for a woman's organisation who would be autonomous in nature. From the viewpoint of limited financial resources and economy of time we were looking for an organisation who would be nearer to our institute and will be easily communicated.

Initially we looked for such an organisation in Kanpur itself. From various sources of literature on women, we came to know that, there is at least one such organisation in the name of 'Sakhi Kendra' in Kanpur, an outcome of the autonomous women's movements, that started in the seventies.

At first, we tried to communicate with them by getting the address from Delhi's Women Resource Centre. After not receiving any reply from them, one day, I along with my thesis supervisor went to the place where their address was given. After reaching that place, we came to know that they have shifted their office to a different place. After a search for about two hours we could locate the residence of one of their key members. The lady was not there but her husband was present. He told us that, 'Sakhi Kendra' has

become dysfunctional. The reasons given were the problem of finance. However, some members are still active and are participating in various rallies on women's issues. As there were no such women's organisation which could have served our purpose, we shifted our search from Kanpur to Delhi. Our search for a women's organisation shifted from Kanpur to Delhi was due to the following reasons:

(i) There were no suitable women's organisations in Kanpur which could have served our purpose.

(ii) Delhi, being the capital city, is a centre for various activities so far as the cause of women is concerned.

(iii) There are various women's organisations with various ideologies working in Delhi. So, there was a choice in selecting an organisation.

(iv) My familiarity with the place because of previous stay.

From I. P. Singh's study on the women's organisations in Delhi, we came to know that Saheli is an autonomous women's organisation who are very active in dealing with women's issues. After taking a formal letter from the thesis supervisor, I went to Delhi. Before going personally to their office, I contacted them on telephone and expressed my desire to meet them. One of the members, who received the call, showed her reluctance to meet me as I was a male researcher. Somehow, I convinced her to meet once in their office where a proper

discussion could take place. She gave a time and invited me on the condition that I should meet a group of office bearers rather than meeting any one of them. I agreed to their proposal and so a date was fixed.

I landed up in the Saheli office in the proposed date. The time was 4 O' clock. A woman activist asked me to wait for some time in a room. The office of Saheli consisted of two rooms, one was meant for office purpose and the other for counselling purpose. I was waiting in the office room from where I could listen to some of the women activists busy talking with some women who had come to discuss their problems with the activists.

After waiting for half an hour about seven women activists came to me and asked me one by one about the purpose of my research. In an informal conversation I had to face questions like — why their organisation was chosen and not others, the purpose of my research, the duration of research, etc. I had to deal with those questions with some amount of care as the first impression carries a lasting impression. I gave a formal letter to them which I had taken from the thesis supervisor.

As the members were well educated there was no difficulty in communicating with them. But I had to face problems in the following:

(1) The organisation does not approve male membership. So there were no male members in the organisation. Therefore,

the idea of a male member working with them was, somehow, not very convincing

(ii) They were not in a position to reveal their field where they were actively working with. From secondary sources, however, I came to know that their main area of operation was Nizamuddin East, where they were in constant touch with the women and their problems

(iii) As the problems of women were very delicate in nature which varied from wife-beating, rape, molestation, divorce and abortion to dowry, the women activists tried their best to discourage men of working with them

(iv) The member-activists themselves in most cases were the victims of male chauvinism. Therefore, they were reluctant in revealing about their personal affairs. Therefore they were taking the plea that they did not want to be a bit of statistics

(v) There were some problems regarding their functioning. The old timers who had founded the organisation were not having a good relationship with the new members. As a result, in this delicate period, they were not allowing any researcher to investigate about their functioning

(vi) Recently, there is a proposal by the government to have a National Council as well as a Code of Conduct for regulating the NGOs*. As a result the NGOs who are operating with the help of funding from various resources are reluctant

* Now Governmental Organisations

in revealing about their functioning to avoid any trouble from the government machinery. These defensive attitudes have made it difficult to work with the NGOs.

Though the above factors posed some problems in collecting the data we could succeed in collecting it by adopting the following procedures

(i) Informal interviews with the key personnel and member-activists. This helps in knowing the organisational structures, various activities of the organisation, their rapport with the target population.

(ii) Case studies with some inmates who have been benefitted by coming in contact with the organisation. This reveals the nature of problems faced by women, the type of activities by the organisation and steps taken to help the inmates, etc.

(iii) Secondary sources like the publications about women and their problems and the role of women's organisations from various women's magazines, journals, report on the status of women, census report, police records, Minority Commission's report etc. This has helped in understanding the macro dimension of the movement.

(iv) Information through the key informants and other women's organisations with differing ideologies are functioning in the area. This has helped in examining the cross-validity and reliability of the data.

(2) ecology movements the Appiko experience:

I was looking for an organisation who are working on environmental issues. In this context I went to Delhi to meet Mr Anil Agarwal, the Director of the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE). The CSE has published two reports one in 1982 and another in 1985 which is a sort of a survey work on the state of India's environmental situations. The centre observes both the nature and activities of the grass-roots micro-movements for environmental protection in the country side, and the plight of the people facing the grave danger of deforestation and displacement.

After meeting with Mr Agarwal I realised that it is necessary to work with those micro-movements who are struggling for survival, to understand the state of environment of the country. Mr Agarwal also suggested to contact various such organisations. Notable among them are Kerala Sahitya Parishad, The Chipko Andolan, and the Bhopal Gas Tragedy Rehabilitation groups, etc. As my interest was to work with a micro-movement who are engaged with environmental issues, I decided to contact Mr Sunder Lal Bahuguna of Chipko Movement. To my good luck I could meet him in Delhi as he had come there to participate in a Seminar.

The meeting with Mr Bahuguna was a fruitful one. I could get many tips including the nature of problems faced by the people in the hills of Tehri Garhwal especially the women and the children. After a prolonged talk, he suggested me to

work either with the Dehradun group of activists who are fighting against displacement due to lime-stone quarrying or with the Aapiko activists who are fighting against large-scale deforestations in the Western Ghats in Karnataka. The reasons why Mr. Bahuguna suggested me to work with these groups were that the above micro-movements were fresh and the Chipko message were spreading faster in these regions. He thought that by working with these groups I will get the flavour of Chipko spirit among the people who are at present experimenting on it.

Whatever the reason may be, I tried to contact these organisations. I got a prompt reply from Mr. Pandurang Hegde, the organiser of Aapiko Movement in Sirsi, Karnataka. Initially I was a bit reluctant to go to a far off place like Karnataka. Language was another problem which I apprehended would be an obstacle. However, my thesis supervisor suggested me to go there because of a warm response from Mr. Hegde.

I reached Sirsi after a long journey from Kanpur. Sirsi is a sub-division of Uttara Kannada District of Karnataka. From the station I went to the office of Parishara Sanrakshana Kendra (PSK) where I found Mr. Pandurang Hegde. Mr. Hegde leads a life of austerity. His belongings include a room given by a local businessman, a pair of Kurta payzama, a charpai, few books and a wooden shelf to keep books. He makes his livelihood through donations and free meals supplied by friends and well wishers. Though he leads a very simple life, one could see a mark of confidence on his face.

With the help of Mr Hegde I got accomodation in a nearby place. In the same evening, I had an informal discussion with Mr Hegde. After getting a brief idea about the problems of the people, the nature of deforestations, efforts by the villagers to stop deforestation and the nature of movements, we decided to visit the villages where the villagers are actively participating in the movement.

We met number of people that include the small and marginal farmers, big farmers, educated and illeterate youth, (both male and female) women, school masters, village level workers, landless labourers, and above all the activists. We visited around ten villages of Sirsi and Salkani Taluka. After visiting these places we decided to select two villages through a random method.

The two villages selected i.e., Salkani and Gubbigadde were within twenty kilometres from Sirsi. Though the distance was not much it was difficult to get transport to come back to Sirsi after a day's work. I decided to stay with the villagers studied. The population of both the villages constituted Havyaka Brahmins, Namdari Naiks, Shettys and Vokkaligas. The traditional pattern, however, shows that the Brahmin culture is the dominant culture over there. In majority of the houses there were the photos of Swami Vivekananda and Lord Vinayaka. People in the villages were strictly vegetarian and the meal constituted the products cultivated in their own lands.

As the concept of hotel was neither there nor desired I had to be a guest in some one's house. There were not more than two persons in one house who could understand English, my medium of communication. The rest would be looking at me with all kinds of questions in their mind. There were no concept of latrine even in the house of a well off farmer. One has to travel at least half a kilometre for a wash.

I had a distinct advantage of being a Brahmin. My surname, somehow, convinced them that I must be a Brahmin and a family member of some priests in Puri of Lord Jagannath fame.

In the village, there is a system of community lunch, where all the male members and children will be sitting together and the female members will be distributing the food. I had to get used to the timings as the breakfast timing was 7 O' clock in the morning and the dinner time was 7 O' clock in the evening. If you do not take food with them you lack mannerism. Therefore, by 7 O' clock in the morning I had to be ready for my day's work. After taking a heavy breakfast the villagers go to their respective fields and come back only during the lunch time.

Paddy and Aricanut are the two main crops grown by the farmers. For that they had to leave for their respective field in the morning and the female folks were busy pilling the nut and put them on the terrace for drying. As the male folks were not available in their respective houses we had to go to the field to meet them.

In the evening, we used to organise community meetings where the villagers were sharing their experiences of Appiko Chaluvalli. They were also explaining their future course of action. Sometimes I used to accompany the folk theatre group who were trying to spread the message of Appiko among the people of different villages.

The tools applied to study the movement was the following

(i) Open-ended interview schedules to understand the villager's attitude toward the movement

(ii) Informal interviews with the organizers of the movement, and few activists of the villages

(iii) To understand the macro dimensions of the movement, the data from secondary sources like office of the Tehsildar, Village Panchayat office, forest office, census reports and survey of India were taken

(iv) To understand the cultural impact of Appiko Chaluvalli on the people, the folk art and other street plays were recorded

(v) Participant observation method was used by staying with the villagers throughout the field study

The civil liberties movement the Lokayan experience

In my post-graduation days I was reading Lokayan bulletins regularly. From the type of issues focussed in the bulletins motivated me to meet the people who are involved in that kind

of intellectual exercise. It so happened that an interest to work on contemporary social movements was developed in me at the Pn D level. In this context meeting with Lokayan people became more concretized.

From the bulletins I knew that Mr. Harsh Sethi was one of the editors of Lokayan Bulletin. I therefore contacted him through telephone one day and a time for meeting was fixed. I had gone to meet him with my research proposal. After an informal conversation with him, when he came to know that my topic was to focus on contemporary social movements in India, he urged me to meet Dr. D L Sethi who could help me in this regard.

The meeting with Harsh Sethi gave a new opening to my research. As he is aware of the various micro-movements that are active in all parts of the country, he could suggest the names of a number of semi-political as well as non-political organisations which are involved in raising the issues of basic fundamental rights of the people that are being suppressed in the name of development.

The next day, I met Dr. D L Sethi who is also a senior fellow in the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. As he is an expert on movement studies, I asked him to explain on the standpoint of Lokayan, whether it can be called a social movement or not. He answered my question in a roundabout way saying that, it can be called as an incipient movement involved in intellectual initiative and networking of

various micro-organisations who are involved in raising the basic issues like the fundamental rights of the common people and their survival, and the issues of democratic decentralization. He also points out that till 1982 in the project phase of Lokayan, they had some activists working in places like Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Singrauli, Bodh Gaya, etc. But after the end of the project phase Lokayan has remained more as an intellectual group involving in dialogue and dissemination rather than concentrating in developing their action-groups. However, he clarifies that in Hyderabad and Singrauli the action groups still work.

The above two discussions motivated me to work with Lokayan (Delhi) and the Lok-Hit Samiti (Singrauli) who I thought are involved in such activities which can be termed as a social movement of its own kind. They are not only involving the intellectuals in the urban areas but also conscientizing the common people in the country side through their action-oriented activities.

The meeting with Dr. D. L. Seth was a fruitful one as he not only appraised me the present state of affairs so far as Lokayan activities are concerned but also suggested me to meet Mr. Smitu Kothari, a co-editor of Lokayan who could help me in going through various literature generated by Lokayan over the years.

After fixing up an appointment with Mr. Smitu Kothari, I went to the Lokayan office. Initially he was a little

apprehensive - out sharing the Lokayan literature with me. But the letter from my thesis supervisor helped me in this regard. It took me around ten days to go through the Lokayan generated literature. I also studied the nature of functioning of Lokayan as an organisation.

While working in the Lokayan office I wanted to meet Prof. Rajni Lochari, who is considered to be one of the main brains behind the Lokayan idea. The Lokayan's office and the administrative block of the United Nations University are situated in the same building. One day I saw him in the complex and asked his secretary to fix up an appointment with him. I got the appointment after four days. In the meantime I prepared a set of questions. The questions were mainly regarding his opinions about the idea of Lokayan, its structures, functions and relationship with grassroots micro-movements, etc.

I met him in the Lokayan office on the scheduled day and we had an informal discussion for about two hours. I was also allowed to record the content of the discussion.

The Lokayan office, Delhi provided me the address of the convener of Lok-Hit Samiti, Singrauli. I wrote a letter to Mr. Awadesh, the convenor which was duly replied by him. From the Lokayan office, Delhi I took a letter and proceeded to Singrauli.

After a hectic bus and train journey I reached Navjeevan Vihar, Bedhan where the office of Lok-Hit Samiti is

situated. I met Mr. Awasth and his two associates Mr. Deepak and Mr. Ajay. Mr. Awasth stayed in a place quite nearer to Navjeevan Village so that I could contact the organisers and the inmates frequently.

During my stay I met a number of people which includes the organisers of Lok-Hit Samiti, the displaced population, number of government officials directly or indirectly dealing with the problem of displacement, members of other voluntary organisations who are concerned with the problems of the people in the area, local journalists, etc.

As Singrauli is situated partly in Uttar Pradesh and partly in Madhya Pradesh I had to meet the officials from both the States. The Lok-Hit Samiti is operating in M.P. whereas its sister organisation Udwasi Kisan Mazdoor Parishad is operating from Uttar Pradesh. Though the President of both the organisations is one, other office bearers are different. This required meeting two different sets of organisers. Same is the case of voluntary organisations and other officials.

I found some varieties in the nature of displacement. There are two categories of populations who can be brought under displacement. They are (1) Twice-displaced populations, once after the construction of Rihand Dam Project and next after the construction of Super Thermal Power Station. They are also in the verge of being displaced once again as large reserves of coal is found in the area of

their present accomodation

(ii) Recently displaced from their villages after the construction of Super Thermal Power Station and being accomodated in nearby places

We have selected the case studies on the basis of their nature of displacement. This has made us understand the socio-psychological states of mind of the displaced populations. On the one hand there are people who had to leave their native place and get rehabilitated in a set up quite strange to them. On the other hand there are people who are at the threat of being further displaced.

The language spoken by the native people posed some problems as it was a bit different from Hindi. The educated youth of the area helped us in this regard.

Keeping in mind the nature of displacement, the nature in the functioning of government officials and other voluntary organisations in the two States, we have followed the following procedure of data collection:

(1) Case studies of different inmates, depending on their nature of displacement

(2) Informal interviews with key organisers of Lok-Hit Samiti and Udwasi Kisan Mazdoor Parishad, and other

(3) Informal meetings with government officials and few key informants from other voluntary organisations

(4) The data from secondary sources like the offices of NTPC, Northern Coalfields Limited, Special Area Development Authority, census reports, local newspaper reports, etc , to understand the macro-dimension of the movement

(5) Observation method by staying with the people during the period of data collection.

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

In recent years, within the sociology discipline, the feminist strategy of putting women at the centre of knowledge has given rise to new insights and redirections of inquiry. In traditional sociology, however, sexual divisions of labour and gender-related issues were considered primarily in the sub-fields of family, demography and community studies etc. The other sub-fields virtually assumed male experience excluding gender as a category of analysis.

3.1 Theoretical Developments of Feminism in the West:

Feminist transformations of the paradigms of sociology have been contained in three major ways: by the limiting assumptions of functionalist conceptualizations of gender, by the inclusion of gender as a variable rather than as a central theoretical concept, and by the ghettoization of feminist insights, especially within Marxist sociology.¹

Talcot Parsons, the chief spokesman of functionalist sociology in the United States, talked of (females) 'expressive roles' and the (male) 'instrumental role' in his study of nuclear family.² He also emphasized that, for the smooth functioning of social order the function of socialization is

1 Judith Stacey and Barrie Thorne, "The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology", Social Problems (Vol. 32, No. 4, April 1985), p. 306.

2. Talcot Parsons and Robert F. Bales, Family, Socialization and Interaction Process, (New York: Free Press).

very important Betty Friedan, a feminist sociologist, criticized Parsons' viewpoint by calling it 'a functionalist freeze', which tacitly legitimized women's subordination and their encapsulation within the family. And she feels, the above functionalist assumptions have remained as an obstacle in the rethinking of feminist sociology.

While talking of gender as a category, Stacy and Thorne feel that, though a large number of surveys now include gender as a variable, there is hardly any attempt in considering it as a social category.

They further feel that, the feminist sociology, instead of developing of its own, has been contained by ghettoization within dominant sociological traditions, especially within Marxist sociology. As a result, the relationship between feminism and Marxism has become more complex.

If we try to elaborate the above analysis little further we find that: (i) The feminists who work within a Marxist tradition follow a critical stance having strong commitment towards theoretical knowledge.

(ii) The central Marxist categories focus on production, labour and class. These concepts are defined in terms of men's relationship to production and labour. Therefore these concepts seem to be more androcentric than concepts like roles and social system.

(iii) In the meantime, Marxists - Feminists have succeeded in developing autonomous institutions, conferences

and publications This body of literature, however has little influence over the rest of contemporary Marxist thought For example, Immanuel Wallerstein (1979) ignores sexual division of labour in his influential book, "The Capitalist World Economy" ³

In the West, 'feminist or anti-feminist consciousness involve a highly articulated challenge to or defense of the system of gender relations in the form of ideology as well as a shared group identity, and a growing politicization resulting in a social movement' ⁴ Within the women's movement we find three major ideological positions which are prominent in the West They are (1) Moderate Feminism (2) Socialist Feminism and (3) Radical Feminism

(1) Moderate feminism: The ideologies developed by the above brands of feminism are still at the process of development The moderate feminists, in comparison to their radical sisters, are not very much tilted towards theorizing and abstract analysis Moderate feminists, on the other hand, strongly believe that instead of being labelled as masculine or feminine, each individual should be free to develop his personality the way he or she feels it best

Broadly speaking, the moderate feminists share the following viewpoints: (1) There should be equal opportunity

3 Stacey and Thorne, op cit , p. 308

4 Ibid , p. 326

for all (ii) Though they are not very critical of motherhood and family, still they consider the institution of the family as oppressive and the motherhood as curse (iii) Moderate feminists consider sexism as dysfunctional for society (iv) They are relatively optimistic so far as their relationship with men are concerned Therefore they value human traits like independence and tenderness as characteristic of both male and female

(2) Socialist feminism: Socialist feminists, influenced by Engels, strongly believe that, the concept of private property and class divisions are the root cause of women's oppression In the modern capitalist society, women play a subordinate role in the family because sexism is functional in this set up The women in the capitalist system become passive as they are economically dependent on men.

Keeping the above viewpoints in mind, the socialist feminists feel that, to free women, the following steps should be kept in mind: (i) The women's struggle is a part of the larger struggle based on class (ii) They should demand equal pay for equal work, equal opportunity in education and employment (iii) Race and sex should not be the determining factors of one's status (iv) The very objective conditions and structures in which the women live must be changed. That will not entrap the women of believing that men per se are their enemy.

(3) Radical feminism Radical feminists believe that the exploitation of woman by man has its origin in biology. The biggest advantage with man is that he is not the bearer of the child. With this advantage man dominates woman in all fields of development. And as a result, women are relegated to an inferior class.

The institutions of marriage, motherhood, love and sexual intercourse are also responsible for the oppression of women as men dominate over women via these institutions. The radical feminists believe that a revolution and not reform is needed to bring women back into their right position.

They feel that, to liberate women, following steps should be taken: (i) Women must be freed from the tyranny of reproductive biology. This will be possible only when child bearing and child rearing become the responsibility of the society as a whole. (ii) Women and children should be fully integrated to all aspects of the larger society. This would be possible if they are given full sexual freedom. (iii) Women and children should be given the freedom to choose the lifestyle that suits them best. At this point, the radical feminists emphasize that women should be active creators of their own destinies rather than as passive victims or objects.

3.2 Development of Women's Organisations in the West

Organizationally Women's Liberation Movements have different origins in the West. In England, the length and

strength of unionized working-class struggle is crucial, whereas in Italy, it is the Marxist students and in America, the Black Power Struggle ⁵

The Black Movement started with the Civil Rights protest in the early sixties was the main source of inspiration for the growth of Women's Liberation in the United States. Here, the "women of the older branch were trained in and had used the traditional forms of political action, while the younger branch has inherited the loose, flexible, person-oriented attitude of the youth and student movements" ⁶. The older branch concentrated their activities regarding legal and economic problems.

In the year 1966, National Organisation for Women, popularly known as NOW was formed. The term NOW, coined by Betty Friedan, had already created sensation by publishing her book "The Feminine Mystique" in 1963. NOW was very successful in getting publicity, but at times, failed to organize itself properly. As a result radical groups who believed in organizing them politically were evolved. As a result, the Chicago group, the first independent group of its kind was formed in 1967. Shulamith Firestone, the future author of the *Dialectic of Sex* (1971) was the main source of inspiration.

5 Juliet Mitchell, Women's Estate (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Book), p. 43

6 J. Freeman, "The Origins of the Women's Liberation Movement", in Denisoff R. Serge and Robert K. Merton (ed.) The Sociology of Dissent (New York: Harcourt Brace Javanovich Inc.), p. 193.

for forming this group. As the members of the Chicago group were grass-root workers, they knew, how to utilize the infrastructure at local level

In short, according to Jo Freeman, in the United States, major elements contributing to the emergence of the women's liberation movement in the sixties were "the growth of a pre-existing communications network which was co-optable to the ideas of the new movement a series of crises that galvanized into action people involved in this network and/or subsequent organizing efforts to weld the spontaneous groups together into a movement "7

Over the last few years, the debates on interpreting woman in terms of gender has become prominent in the United States. According to this formulation, gender has been defined by socially constructed relationships between women and men, among women and among men in social groups. Studies on gender have been influenced by the notion that women and men constitute different social groups. As a result, 'feminist and anti-feminist consciousness involves a highly articulated challenge to or defense of the system of gender relations in the form of ideology, as well as, a shared group identity and a growing politicization resulting in a social movement' 8

7 Ibid, p 197

8. Judith M. Garson and Kathy Peiss, "Boundaries, Negotiation and Consciousness: Reconceptualizing Gender Relations", Social Problems (Vol 32, No 4, April 1985), p 326.

The concepts of gender have helped in integrating empirical research on women. We also find out that the rise of feminism occurs in a dialectical context in the U S A in which the feminist challenge to the existing system of gender arrangements evokes or an organized response, which in turn influences the nature of feminist consciousness and practice.

3.3 Development of Women's Movement in India: An Overview

The history of women's question in India can be traced back to the vedic period (2500 B.C. to 1500 B.C.). In this period, women were far more privileged. They were enjoying fair amount of personal freedom and equality with men. They were also privileged in terms of education and other trainings.

In this period monogamy was practiced and widow remarriage was allowed, as a result of which women occupied a high status in the family.

During the period 1500 to 500 B.C. though the women enjoyed a high status in the family, they were discouraged to be sent to great teachers and other centres of learning. Then came the period (i.e., 500 B.C. to 500 A.D.), when women were discouraged from participating in vedic activities. In this period getting a son became a religious necessity as he alone could perform certain religious functions and rituals.

Though Buddhism in the meanwhile gave a place of honour to women, the post-Buddhist period was marked by conflicting religious and social thoughts. In this period, the right of

women to inherit property was not accepted she was only entitled to maintenance

In the period from 500 A.D. to 1200 A.D. the position of women in India further deteriorated. As they were not much educated, they blindly followed the dictums and rules laid down by Puranic literature. As a result, they lost their original status and position in the society. They became a deprived lot.

Though we have a long history of the women's studies in India, with the development of the Indian Press in the 19th century, it became a major issue in social debate. Following are the three phases where the issues of woman were raised systematically. They are (1) The Social Reform Movement of the 19th century, (2) The Nationalist Movement and (3) The Post-Independence Movements.

(1) The social reform movement: The 19th century reform movement was initiated mainly by Western educated Indian male intellectuals. They include both liberal and revivalists. Their main target was against the obscure social customs, practices and belief, of which women were the worst sufferers.

Among the male intellectuals who showed their concern, foremost was Raja Rammohan Roy, who succeeded in having 'Sati' abolished in 1829. With the effort of Keshab Chandra Sen, the Civil Marriage Act of 1872 was passed, which abolished child marriage. Swami Dayanand Saraswati created the Arya Samaj. The Brahmo Samaj as well as Arya Samaj challenged Hindu orthodox

and created room for women to raise their voice. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar helped set up the first government school for girls in Calcutta in 1849.

In brief, the social reform movement called for issues like raising the age of marriage, by abolishing child marriage, improving the position of widow by introducing widow remarriage and providing education to girls so that they can go for better employment.

The social reformers of the 19th century, however, were primarily concerned with the problems of women of a particular class in urban areas. Though these women were from urban middle class, they sought to improve the status of women, within the existing limitations. Notable among them were Swarnakumari of the Tagore family, who opened a Ladies Theosophy Society (1882), Pandita Ramabai, a Sanskrit scholar, associated herself in a number of societies. There were other women like Ramabai Ranade, Laxmi Chandraverkar, Kashibai Naurange and Shantibai Randiker who were members of families already involved or influenced by the reform movement.

Though these women leaders continued their activities in the tradition of the social reform movement, their organisational experience motivated them to separate from the reform movement and form exclusive women's organizations. This led to the setting up of an all-India women's organisations, the All-India Women's Conference in 1927. We will elaborate on this aspect later on.

(2) The nationalist movement In this phase, Gandhi was instrumental in bringing out a large number of women into the fold of freedom struggle. In the meantime the All India Women's Conference (AIWC) was also born.

According to Maria Mies⁹, Gandhi created a new myth of Indian womanhood, Sita-like in her devotion to service and self-sacrifice, whether in her family or to her nation. In this phase, the emphasis was more on legislative rights, rather than on economic opportunities and regulations for wage-earning women. As a result, this generation's middle class preoccupation with legislation had a little effect on the masses of Indian women.

Gail Minault¹⁰ argues that both the liberals and radicals of the nationalist movement saw women's participation in the freedom struggle as a behind the scene effort.

(3) Post-independence movements. Even after independence, customs and practices, influenced by religion, were deeply embedded in tradition. As a result, there was hardly any change in the status of women due to so called economic and legislative measures. In this process, the rural women were the worst sufferers.

9 Maria Mies, "Indian Womenhood and Leadership", Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars (VII, 1, Jan - March, 1975) pp 58-59

10 Minault, Gail, "The Extended Family as Metaphor and the Expansion of Women's Realm", in Gail Minault (ed) The Extended Family, Women and Political Participation in India and Pakistan (New Delhi, Chanakya Publications 1981)

According to Neera Desai¹¹ women's movement in post-independence period can be divided into three phases (i) 1947 to late sixties (ii) Late sixties to 1975 and (iii) Post 1975 period

According to her, the period from 1947 to late sixties was a period of complacency among women. They accepted the things without protest.

In the period from late sixties to 1975, India experienced severe economic crisis. As a result women raised their voice against the growing price. There were supports from rural women in this regard.

In 1975, the International Women's Year (IWF) was celebrated as a result of which Indian women were in contact with feminist groups in the West. The scholars in India as well as abroad took interest in studying the problems of third world women.

It is in this period that a number of committee reports openly admitted that unemployment among women is much higher than estimated. The National Commission on Labour (1969) focussed on the problems of Wage discrimination and general oppression of women workers. The situation was even worse in the rural sectors. The Report of the committee on Unemployment (1973) also shared similar opinions.

11. Neera Desai, "Women's Movement in India - An Overview", UGC Seminar on Social Movements of the Underprivileged (January, 15th- 17th, 1983) p 3

In 1975 when the Report of the Committee on the status of women in India was prepared, the factors responsible for changes in women's role over the years were revealed. The major changes, in brief, were (i) Changes in the mode of production through commercialization, (ii) shifts in the value systems through the process of modernisation, (iii) urbanisation and the rising standards and costs of living, (iv) legislative reforms, (v) expansion of education, (vi) demographic transition etc

According to Vina Mazumdar and Kumud Sharma¹², "while most of the studies perceive a linkage between women's status/roles and the stratified structure of society and power relations, we have yet to discover the determinants of women's status as perceived by women, and by others at different levels of society

However, the beginning for a true women's movement has started with the development of autonomous women's organisations

3.4 The Role of Organisations in Women's Studies of India

In the 19th century, that is, in the era of social reforms, associations for women were started by male intellectuals

The women's Indian Association (WIA) 1917 and the All-India Women's Conference (AIWC), formed in 1927 were landmarks in the history of women's organisations in India

12. Vena Mazumdar and Kumud Sharma, "Women's Studies. New Perceptions and the Challenges", Economic and Political Weekly (Jan 20, 1979) pp 119-120.

The WIA and the AIWC, despite their activities were mainly reformist in nature, they had a close link with the nationalists too. On the one hand, they wanted to have close relations with the nationalists, but on the other hand, they wanted to remain autonomous to give priorities to feminist issues. As a result, their priorities changed from the welfare approach to demanding equality for women and men. In this context, they shared the Gandhian view that "men and women by nature and biology were meant to perform different but complementary roles in society and each had the right to be supreme in his and her domain" ¹³

The above intention was very clear from the following demands made by them: (i) co-education instead of education, (ii) legislative reforms regarding the age of marriage, divorce, and inheritance, (iii) right to economic equality i.e., right to a husband's income and pension for widows.

The AIWC adopted four main strategies to deal with the social problems. They were propaganda, protest meetings, legislation, and vigilance committees. When India became independent, non-controversial demands of the women's organisations like setting up of Social Welfare Board, allocations of large amount of funds for the welfare of women in the Five Year Plan, passing of Hindu Code Bill etc. were accepted.

13 Nandita Gandhi, "The Emergence of Autonomous Women's Groups", Lokayan Bulletin (4/6, 1986) p. 87.

If we closely examine the role of women's organisations like WIA and AIWC along with the nationalist movement, we find that the nationalist leaders were sympathetic to the women's issues raised by the above organisations as they considered the development of women as an indicator of social and political progress. But, it was seen that women's issues were not encouraged at the expense of nationalist struggle. A prime example of this can be seen at the time of debate on Hindu code.

The women's organisations like the WIA and AIWC, gradually faced criticism due to the following reasons: (i) The women leaders were blamed for their middle-class bias towards the legislation. (ii) They were not confronting with the basic socio-economic issues to which the masses of Indian women were suffering from. (iii) They were not showing much concerns towards issues like dowry, wifebeating, rape, projection of women as a sex symbol in the media etc. (iv) They were not dealing with other dependency structures like patriarchal values, sexual division of labour, etc.

The period from late sixties to the mid seventies saw growing disparities between rich and poor. As a result there was economic crisis and stagnation which led to poverty and social strife. The majority of the people felt that the growing prices are due to the adoption of wrong technology policies and models of development.

This resulted in spontaneous demonstrations and protests by women. The background was prepared for more organized effort

These groups were either frustrated due to price rise or disillusioned with the existing political parties. There was a "need to experiment with alternative methods of organisation which emphasized conscientisation and people's participation and were rooted in convictions about possibilities of societal and structural change" ¹⁴

These women were to some extent influenced and encouraged by the western women's movement, the declaration of the International Women's Decade, the report on the Status of Women. The Mathura rape case acted as an ignition in the above factors.

This upsurge led to various types of organisations (i) The existing political parties and other women's organisations rejuvenated their women's front as some women preferred to work within the established organisations

(ii) The autonomous women's organisations - groups which are very different from the type of organisations we have had so far.

(iii) Emergence of interest groups with feminist perspective. These groups work on different fronts like media, law, academia, popularising science, health etc.

3.5 Autonomous Women's Organisations and Women's Movement in India

Soon after the International Women's Year was declared, a new consciousness arose in the mind of women's organisations

in India They felt the need to search for new values and avenues of collective action A new wave of women's struggle was clearly on the card This resulted in the origin of several new organisations The most distinguishing feature of these organisations was that, they themselves were taking the initiative to fight out their own problems

The above groups of women known as autonomous women's groups (AWGs) emerged as special interest groups of women to fight against a wide range of issues

According to Vibhuti Patel¹⁵

the characteristics of autonomous women's movement constitute the following (i) Women organise and lead the movement (ii) Fight against oppression, exploitation, injustice and discrimination against women is the first and foremost priority of the movement, any other considerations can't subordinate women's rights (iii) It can't be subordinated to the decisions and necessities of any political or social group/organisation

From the above observation of Patel, we can infer the following about autonomous women's organisations (AWOs)

(i) The AWOs have snapped their fingers at both conservative and left ideology In remaining autonomous they have broken tradition.

(ii) They believe in fighting against social evils like casteism, communalism and 'sexism' simultaneously as they presume that woman is considered to be an oppressed sex due to patriarchy.

15 Vibhuti Patel, "Autonomous Women's Movements in India", (ISST Pamphlet, 1984) p. 2.

(iii) Though economic independence of women is considered to be a necessary condition for women's liberation, it is not a necessary condition of AWOs. In order to achieve total liberation one has to fight for right in all the fields.

(iv) To achieve liberation, it is necessary to convey the message of feminism through various media like magazines, newsletters, plays, skits, songs, posters, exhibitions etc. Through the above media, one can reach the masses.

(v) Women's problem need to be fought on a day to day basis.

Initially, the AWOs have to face criticism from dominant conservative and fundamentalist forces, the traditional Leftist groups and to some extent by the progressive liberal groups. They are "accused of being elitist, anti-male, anti-family, anti-science, foreign funded and influenced by the West."¹⁶ But it has been observed that, these AWOs have successfully worked along with other contemporary agitations and movements.

Today, autonomous women's groups not only exist in bigger cities like Delhi, Bombay and Madras but also exist in relatively smaller cities like Kanpur, Patna, Kolhapur, Aurangabad, Raipur etc. If we look at the growth of AWOs we find that towards the end of the 1970s they were set up in Hyderabad (Stree Shakti Sanghatana), Delhi (Stree Sangharsh), Bombay (Forum Against Rape), Patna (Ajivika Press), Madras (Pennuramai Iyakkam), Kanpur (Sakhi Kendra) to name a few.

with a brand of AWOs with a socialist feminist outlook also came into existence. They are Nari Sangharsh Samiti, Forum Against Oppression, Sahala, Mahila Sangharsh Vahini, Women's Aid Centre etc. The most significant development in the growth of AWOs was, however, the formation of autonomous women's groups in the rural areas. The setting up of Shramik Stree Mukti Sanghatana (Dhulia) and Chhatisgarh Mahila Jagriti Sangh (Madhya Pradesh) show that AWOs are not limited to educated urban middle class women only.

At present the tasks before the AWOs are many. Though many AWOs have been formed in recent years, many more need to be set up, specially in the rural areas.

Besides that (i) they need to have linkages with various other organisations who are directly or indirectly involved with women's cause, (ii) Though their main concentrations are on contemporary social evils like dowry, wife-beating, rape, child-marriage, they need to focus on broader social, cultural, economic and political perspectives. (iii) They need to understand the women's question at an ideological level. (iv) There is also a need for the AWOs to have co-ordination with different fronts like academia, media, law, health etc. The message of oppression needs to be conveyed to mass through various journals, newsletters, data sheet etc.

Though the AWOs have initiated a process of long struggle for the cause of women, there is a need for new strategy, methodology and ideology.

Like in the West attempts have been made in India to term various women's rights groups depending upon their ideological stand points

The women's groups who are popularly known as "liberal feminists" believe in social reforms. They are highly influenced by the social reform movements of the 19th century. Their main aim is to create a sense of personal and professional pride among women. They strongly believe in legal reforms and thereby analyse the pros and cons of women's oppression and repression in legal terms, rather than challenge the social structure as such. According to a study by I P Singh¹⁷, on various organisations in Delhi, Karmika Nari Raksha Samiti, Mahila Dakshata Samiti, Self Employed Women's Association and Young Women's Christian Association fall into this category.

The other category known as 'the socialist feminist' try to focus women's oppression in the overall socio-economic and cultural reality. They try to propagate the idea of socialism, secularism and democratic rights among women. Their main aim is to establish linkages between women's issues with broader social, economic and political issues. They believe that the problem of women will be solved if a solidarity with working class, peasants and, in general, the masses struggling for their rights, is established. According to Singh¹⁸, All India

17 I P. Singh, "Ideological Positions on the Women's Question", III NCWS (Sub-Theme-10, 1-4 October, 1986)

18 Ibid , pp 10-11

Democratic Women's Association and National Federation of Indian Women fall in this category

The 'radical feminists', the last among the classification of the women's groups in India envisage that men are the root cause of women's exploitation. Therefore, they discard patriarchy. They believe that like casteism and communalism, sexism is also one of the worst enemy of the society. Hence it is necessary to fight against patriarchy. Mr Singh in his study has not found a single group of women who can be really called radical feminists. The reasons he gives for it is that, "one gains few crumbs of rights in a bourgeois democratic country like ours if only buttresses the capitalist system, giving rise to reformist and revivalist zeal"¹⁹

According to Singh, the organisation we have chosen for our study believes in radical-socialist ideology. In his words, "though many members of Saheli call themselves as socialist feminists, it retains few of its radical streaks"²⁰. Before drawing any conclusion regarding the ideological standpoint of Saheli as a women's organisation, we need to analyse its functioning in detail.

In the beginning of 1980, issues like rape, wife-beating dowry, projection of women as a sex symbol gained prominence. Behind most of the issues, the women's group feel that some sort of patriarchal values which are responsible for it. As

19 Ibid , p 15

20 Ibid , p 14

a result of which there was a spurt of women's groups all over the country. However, they became more prominent in the metropolis and other urban areas, the members of which were the educated middle class women.

In this period, there were large number of rape cases which raised public hue and cry. However, it is the Mathura rape case which motivated different women's organisations to unite and raise their voice against rape. In Mathura, a fourteen year old girl from Chandrapur near Nagpur was called to the police station at late night and was raped by the policemen on duty. After an open letter written by four professors of Delhi University condemning the judgement on Mathura rape case, autonomous women's organisations came out in the streets and demanded the reopening of the case. As a matter of fact the rapists were convicted to seven and half years of rigorous imprisonment. This victory gave courage to the women's organisations to set up women's centres where the women could get emotional, legal and medical services at the time of distress.

It is at this point that various centres, like women's centre (Bombay), Sakhi Kendra (Kanpur) and Saheli (Delhi), to name a few, came into existence.

Saheli as a women's centre started functioning in a modest way in a garage in August 1981. At that time they had only 16 volunteers. Incidentally, it started out of agitational activities. Some of the volunteers had

experiences with organisations like Manushi Stree Sangharsh etc When it started, it hardly had a clear-cut ideology and stipulated goals

Saheli, as a women's organisation was maintaining a low profile till 1983 when suddenly a young woman's problem and police misbehavior to some of the volunteers of Saheli brought them a lot of publicity It so happened that a sub-inspector of Nizamuddin Police Station came to Saheli office along with two brothers of a woman who were enquiring about her whereabouts In the process, some of the volunteers of Saheli were manhandled as well as their daily dairy was snatched away

Disgusted with the attitude of Police officials, Saheli volunteers went to protest outside the police station As a result, an inquiry was ordered and the SHO was transferred. In the meantime, the young woman got a judgement from the Supreme Court in her favour The volunteers of Saheli considered that to be a victory of the organisation as well as of the women This case motivated the volunteers to organise themselves more systematically

In due course, with increasing memberships and financial resources, Saheli could reach to a stage where they could formulate a clear-cut aims and objectives The main aims and objectives²¹ of Saheli at present are

(i) To provide services for women, such as, legal and medical aid, employment, training, shelter etc (ii)

21 Saheli Newsletter (Vol 1, No 4, September 1986), p 19

To create social awareness about the status of women
(iii) To help women in distress (iv) To facilitate
research and study into issues that concern women
(v) To publish and disseminate material concerning
women (vi) To hold discussions, seminars and workshops
on women's issues (vii) To provide upto date
information to women's organisations and voluntary
associations through a documentation service (viii)
To provide a library service and circulate existing
books and materials concerning women in different
languages (ix) To set up area-based centres which
provide similar services (x) To assist groups and
organisations engaged in similar activities (xi)
To undertake activities to further the status of
women

Although the activities of Saheli have been divided into
many categories, broadly speaking, the activities can be
grouped into (i) counselling (ii) research and documentation
and (iii) co-ordination with other women's organisations and
interest groups Before going into details of the above
activities, it is essential to discuss about Saheli's
organisational structures

Saheli has been registered under the Societies Registration
Act of 1860 Therefore, all the provisions of the above act
is applicable to Saheli

(a) Membership Initially, the volunteers believed in
collective functioning where they feel that everyone has
equal responsibility towards the organisation They deny the
fact that they have any head in the designation of President
or Chair person They also deny that they have any hierarchical
structure However, if we analyse the membership structure,
we find that, they have different categories of members
having different status in the organisation When asked about

the categories of membership, one of the members told us that, 'though they still function collectively, due to increase in memberships, some confusion arose. As a result, to put the things in black and white, they had to do so "

They have two categories of membership (i) individual members and (ii) institutional members. There are three sub-categories in the individual memberships: ordinary members, associate members and support members.

Ordinary members are those who pay Rs 24/- per year as an annual membership subscription. They have the right to vote in both the General Body Meetings and the Bi-Annual Conferences. Associate members have, however, voting rights only in the Bi-Annual Conferences. Support members do not have a voting right.

Members of institutional members have the right to use all the facilities provided by Saheli and only one representative of the institutional members have the right to cast a vote.

Saheli is an autonomous women's organisation having only women as members.

(b) Executive functionaries The constitution of Saheli prescribes an Executive Committee elected by the General Body at its annual meeting. This constitutes five co-ordinators and two members. They are internal coordinator, coordinator-finance, co-ordinator-cases, co-ordinator-publications,

co-ordinator-library and documentation and two committee members

Although they have an Executive Committee, it does not work according to the constitution. The reasons stated are (a) they want to involve all the members in the decision-making process (b) To wipe out a feeling of 'leaders' and 'led' from the minds of the members (c) By this structure, the members will be more adept to task performance rather than co-ordination (d) This will help in developing efficiency, accountability, professionalism and discipline

Initially, they had tried the methods of carrying out their tasks collectively. But in recent years the duty of the coordinator and ordinary members are clearly defined. The coordinators are considered to be the most knowledgeable and accountable members who will meet for all policy decisions whereas for all developing perspective other active members are utilised. From the above classification, one infers that though they do not believe in a formal hierarchical structure as such, they believe in giving more importance to a small group called coordinators. One advantage with this type of functioning, however, is that the coordinators are rotational in nature and, thereby, it eliminates the possibility of monopoly of any one coordinator in the decision-making process.

(c) Funding Funds play a significant role in every organisation because to run an organisation a lot of money is

required In the initial years, Saheli was dependent on individual contribution The member's contribution per year was Rs 24/- As the workload increased, there were need for more funds

As the money was not sufficient to run the organisation, the members decided to depend on various sources Initially, opinions of members were divided on the issue of whether to receive funds from outside or not

After an initial hitch they came to the conclusion that "funding from a number of sources could be used judiciously, to make their work effective and at the same time to maintain their autonomy "²²

At the end of the fourth year of setting up of Saheli, they have raised the following amount

<u>Sources</u>	<u>Amount (in Rupees)</u>
1 Individual donations	1,50,000
2 Legal Aid Committee	30,000
3. Ministry of Social Welfare	28,000
4. Publications	13,500

(Source Saheli The First Four Years Published in 1985)

The amount received from Legal Aid Committee was to deal with case work, whereas the money received from the Ministry of Social Welfare was for the purpose of setting up of a short stay home for the needy women When asked about donations

from foreign agencies. One of the members told us that 'Funds from foreign agencies should not be accepted on a regular basis as the policy of the Govt. on its regulations changes rapidly.'

3.6 Major Activities of Saheli

As we have already mentioned, the major activities of Saheli can be categorised mainly into three areas (i) Counselling (ii) Research and Documentation, and (iii) Co-ordination with other women's organisations and interest groups regarding problems of women.

(1) Counselling Counselling has become one of the major functions of Saheli. As the organisation is in a metropolitan city, it has to deal with problem areas like dowry, wife-beating, rape, divorce, economic hardships of women etc.

Initially, Saheli did not have a good network. After an incident of police misbehavior with some of the members of Saheli and a successful organisation of a workshop called Kirti, they got good amount of publicity. Besides that, some of their members who were working in the field areas tried to keep rapport with the women of that locality. The above factors attracted the women in distress to keep in touch with Saheli members for counselling.

According to a member, majority of women who come for counselling are having problem either with the husband or with in-laws or in worst case both husband and in-laws are

involved as majority of women are married, problem- areas are mainly concentrated with husband-wife relationship of which the off shoots are of course, the problem of dowry, wife-beating, divorce etc

The procedures adopted by the members of Saheli are in the following ways when a woman in distress comes to Saheli office, the members listen to her carefully With proper counselling, they try to breakdown the isolation felt by the woman That's done in order to gain confidence in her After listening to her problem carefully, the members try their best so that she goes back to her family members If she does not agree in that, they provide temporary shelter to her and in the meantime they approach her family members If the response of the family members are not very positive, they contact the woman and appraise her the ways by which she can think about the future course of action

If the woman wants to take some legal actions the members try to arrange a lawyer for her If she is poor and can't afford to meet the finance, they try to arrange a legal aid for her

In case, the woman does not want to take any legal action, but wants some employment, she is also helped in this regard

The members also help the police to take action against the husband/in-laws In case the police or the concerned authorities do not take any step then the members try to expose their inefficiencies before the public through

demonstrations and press reports In some cases, the police or the concerned authorities help the women by sending them to Saheli office for help They also try to collect information regarding her

(1) Problem

(ii) Copies regarding FIR report from the police and other documents,

(iii) Informations regarding dowry, marriage, religion she belongs to,

(iv) Educational qualifications and capacity regarding employment,

(v) Informations regarding her relatives, and

(vi) Her other necessities

While talking to her, they try to gain confidence in her by saying that the problem she is facing is not an individual problem but the problem of women as such

Over the years, Saheli has become a busy centre where women with variety of problems come. Their main aim is to share their experiences with the members of Saheli so that they can be helped for a better future In the last five years, around 300 women with variety of problems have come to Saheli When asked about their progress, a member told us that "dealing with 300 cases of women in the whole population of Delhi it may be nothing, but for those 300 women, it's a lot "

Here, we would like to deal with a couple of cases by which we could analyse the type of problem- areas encountered by the members of Saheli

(a) Case of Mrs 'A' Mrs A belongs to a muslim community She is from a village of U P She comes from a poor family They were 11 brothers and sisters but now only three of them have survived One of her sisters got married early but sh was tortured by her in-laws to the extent that she had to commit suicide

Mrs A also got married early to a farmer of the nearby village Besides helping her husband in land she used to take care of a buffalow presented by her mother She could earn some money by selling the buffalow's milk After the death of her mother, her brother also came to stay with her as there were no one to look after him

Soon after her brother joined, the attitude of her husband completely changed He also refused to look after his children He only loved his money then It so happened that her brother's attitude also changed towards her For every small things he beat her One day, she decided to leave the place Just after Ramzan, she along with her children came to Allahabad She stayed with one of her relations but they cheated three tolas of gold which she had kept in their custody After that incident, she came to Delhi

In Delhi, she found it extremely difficult to get a job She could only manage work of a maid servant which were temporary in nature She was also accused of theft and locked in one of her malik's house.

After spending life miserably for few months, she came to know about Saheli. Now she is not only satisfied with her but also considers herself a part of Saheli.

She has been looking after the problem of women in the basti, and lives in her house is used as a shelter for women.

From the above case we infer the following few trends, so far as, the oppression of women is concerned.

(i) Mrs. A comes from a poor, large family in the rural areas of U.P. she got married at a very early age. As the marriage took place without her consent, adjustment with the husband was never proper.

(ii) Families in a typical village of U.P. are generally patriarchal in nature. As a result, her husband always wanted to play a dominant role. Not only that, she had to be beaten by her brother also.

(iii) Mrs. A was from a poor family. She could not, therefore afford to have higher education, as a result of which she had to remain as a puppet in the hand of her husband.

(iv) In Allahabad, her gold was snatched away by her relatives. As she was not educated, she could not keep a written document with her.

(v) When she came to Delhi, she also faced similar problems. As she was not educated she could not look for a skilled job. As a result, she was tortured by her maliks.

After joining Saheli she has benefitted the following things (i) She feels that women can lead a comfortable life without the assistance of men (ii) Though she comes from a rural background, she can also look after the problems of women who have migrated from rural areas but have settled down in urban areas (iii) She has developed the sense of "we" feeling and shows her concern for the betterment of women

The self-confidence, she has gained after coming in contact with Saheli, is itself a substantial achievement for her

(b) Case of Ms 'B' Ms B is a Hindu woman wanting to marry a Muslim man under the Special Marriage Act (SMA) The sole purpose of getting married under SMA is to retain their respective faiths It so happened that, in each hearing the family members of the bride under the influence of Arya Samaj brought professional gundas and applied all tactics to solemnise the marriage under the SMA Ultimately Ms B had to convert herself and got married under the Muslim Law

Ms B joined Jamia Millia in 1977 where she came across a Muslim gentleman After seven years of relationship, they decided to get married When they decided to get married under the SMA, all kinds of pressures were put on the Ms B

According to Ms B, the decision of getting married to a Muslim man was taken as a communal issue Her family members took the help of Arya Samajis, who at first tried to convert the man to Hinduism When they failed in that, they locked Ms. B in the house Her brother was very harsh to her He threa-

tened her by saying that if she gets married to that person she will not get any share of property from him

When there was more torture, one day, she tried to escape from home but to her misfortune her mother came to know about that and strangulated Ms B with her dupatta. In order to save her life, she shouted for help. The police came to her rescue but the Arya Samajis threatened her and compelled her to write a statement that there was no conflict between her and her mother

At this point Ms B contacted Saheli through a friend of her. If we analyse the case in a deeper way, we find out that (i) woman, whether a Hindu or Muslim are subject to repression in the society. In the above case Ms B is deprived of her fundamental rights guaranteed to all the citizens under the Constitution of India. In this case, she is deprived of her right to life and personal liberty (Ar 21), a right against illegal detention (Art 22) and freedom of speech, expression and movement (Art 19 (1) A). In the case of Ms B, it's her family members, who with the help of a religious group, deprived her of the above rights. Here, one could find out that a major source of violence and oppression is the family itself

(ii) The very purpose of the Special Marriage Act is to accomodate the people from various faiths, so far as marriage is concerned. Though it gives freedom to individuals in terms of marriage, it also provides that any person can object the marriage notice. As a result, solemnization of marriage under the SMA has become a difficult task

(111) When an institution like marriage is given a communal colour, the very purpose of secularism is defeated in our country. In this process, women are the worst sufferers as they have to adjust with the family members as well as with the members of the religion, they belong to

(2) Research and documentation Saheli has tried their best to pose the question of women's oppression through various workshops

In the third year of its inception, Saheli organised a workshop called "Kriti". This was an workshop on creative expression through which women could express their agonies. Organisations from various parts of the country came and participated in it. Their main ways of expressing the feelings of women were through song, play, exhibition, photography writing and slide-tape show etc. Their main goal was to express "what they feel about being women and how they see the world" in that workshop. For an organisation like Saheli, it was a big occasion.

In August 1986, Saheli organised a seminar on "Population Policy and its Implications for Women". Special emphasis was given on injectables. In the seminar a number of papers regarding the use of injectables were read. From the papers, one could infer that, among the injectable contraceptives developed so far, there were objections regarding the use of DMPA and NET-EN in our country as the women, who would use that, are not properly appraised. From various studies, it is also known that there

are negative side-effects of these injectables, specially if used in the tropical areas

Apart from these Saheli also brings out a bi-monthly newsletter for private circulation. In this, they try to focus on contemporary problems regarding women. Saheli has a small library which is being utilized for research and documentation by members of Saheli as well as members from other women's organisations.

(3) Co-ordination with other women's organisations Apart from counselling, research and documentation, Saheli also participates with other women's organisations on various women's issues.

In the famous Sudha Goel case, Saheli with eleven other women's organisations protested against the High Court Judgement. Initially the lower court in Delhi sentenced to death the husband, brother-in-law and mother-in-law of Sudha Goel, in a dowry death case. On an appeal to the High Court, all three were, however, acquitted.

In 1984, soon after the assassination of Indira Gandhi, there were large-scale violence all over Delhi. After the Delhi riot, Saheli took active role in rebuilding the confidence of the Sikh Community. They participated in citizens forums, working against communalism, holding peace marches etc. In the carnage, the "widows" were the worst sufferers. Saheli, as an organisation, tried their best to deal with various aspects like health, education, rations, material necessities, as well as emotional and psychological support.

In June 1985 Saheli started a training-cum-production centre for ready-made garments, to employ sixty widows who were affected by the riot. They also got funds from the Swedish Development Corporation to start a child-care programme for 120 children.

At the end of 1984 the world's worst industrial disaster took place in Bhopal in which nearly 2500 people lost their lives and more than two lakhs people were severely affected.

As the first trimester babies on December 1984 were due for delivery in mid 1985, Saheli along with other voluntary organisations participated in a pregnancy birth defects in affected women.

3.7 Saheli's Future Course of Actions

Apart from their routine works Saheli has initiated their activities in three areas for future course of action. They are (a) Petition seeking a ban on NET-EN (b) Survey on domestic violence and (c) Systematic intervention in the area of unorganised sector. These activities need further elaborations.

(a) NLE-LN is an injectable contraceptive, developed by a West German firm called Schering. The Govt. of India is thinking seriously to introduce this contraceptive at large scale in India.

NET-EN²³ (Norethisterone oenanthate) prevents pregnancy by the following ways (i) When NET-EN is injected, it totally disrupts the cyclical integrity of the natural hormonal balance, and thereby prevents ovulation (ii) It also makes the cervical mucus thick and scant, and thus, creates a barrier to sperm (iii) makes the endometrium less suitable for implantation of a fertilized ovum and (iv) possibly changes the rate of menstruation

Various studies show that NET-EN causes serious negative side-effects. Among the most serious problems caused are (i) Menstrual disturbances, (ii) other hormonal disturbances, (iii) cancer risks, (iv) effect on progeny, (v) return of fertility

Apart from physiological considerations, members of Saheli strongly feel that ethical considerations should also be taken into consideration before NET-EN being introduced at a large scale

Considering the above facts in mind, Saheli seeks petition against the ban on NET-EN in the supreme court. They are also coordinating with other organisations with respect to the petition and also the other campaign work

(b) Though Saheli has planned a survey on domestic violence, it had not progressed very far

23 Source "The Case Against NET-EN", Paper read by Saheli Collectives in a Seminar on "Population Policy and its Implications for Women (August 30, 1986)

(c) With the help of other voluntary organisations like YKA and their through Council for Social Development, their aim is to work in the area of unorganised sector. At present, their main aim is to generate a viable organisation of women in the unorganised sector to take up work related and family or community related issues.

After analysing Saheli as a women's organisation and its day-to-day activities one reaches with the following conclusions:

(1) Saheli Women's Resource Centre is an autonomous women's organisation. In this organisation, membership is open for women only. Though they take the help of men, it is basically an organisation by women for women.

(2) The members claim that ideologically they belong to a socialist group. But, if we analyse their outlook, we find that some of them seem to be radical in nature.

(3) Though the membership is open to all classes of women, majority of the members belong to middle or upper middle class.

(4) This organisation is a typical urban-based women's organisations dealing with the problems of women in the urban areas. One member admits that they have distinct disadvantage of being in the urban areas, as they are cut off from rural areas. However, she clarifies by saying that, their consistent efforts are on in developing a link with organisations in rural areas.

(5) As the organisation is urban-based they have to deal with problems like rape, wife-beating, abortions, and problem in the unorganised sectors etc

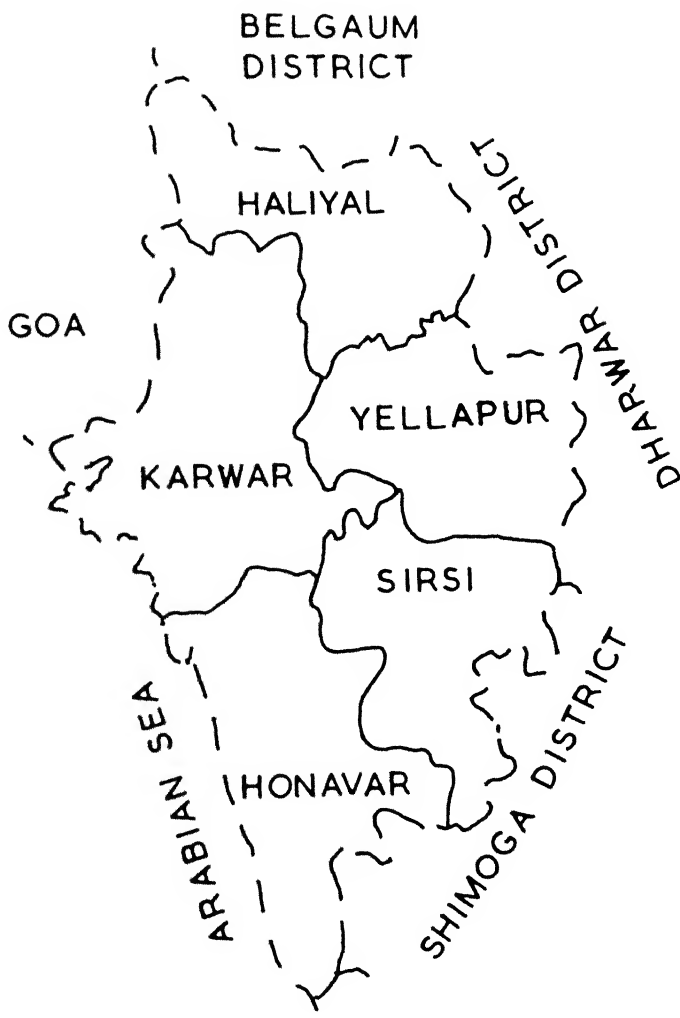
(6) Initially, they believed in collective functioning without any hierarchy in the organisation due to rapid expansion of the organisation, the decision-making are in the hands of a sub-group now

(7) Saheli does not claim to be a purist organisation they believe that for a systematic expansion of the organisation, they need to have more funds which they cannot meet through members' subscription only. However, they are against fundraising from outside the country

(8) As far as their support for NGOs is concerned, they are one of the signatories to the recent move by NGOs against Government's restrictions on their activities. However, they strongly believe that NGO is a very broad term and there should be proper categorisations of them depending upon their size

(9) The organisation believes in looking women's problem as an integrated one and not in isolation

(10) They believe that, their activities will be more consolidated and systematic in years to come



MAP SHOWING THE LOCATION OF UTTARA
KANNADA DISTRICT

ECOLOGY MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

In recent years, the concern for protection of environment has gained impetus. In this regard, ecology movements seem to be an attempt to shift value back to nature and man. This ecological culture raises the question of how to deal with nature inside and outside ourselves. The body, the biological structure, the environment are the limits for the "destructive creation" of technological societies. "Where can human intervention stop? What is the place for 'nature' still constituting and surrounding human life?"¹

In the Phenomenology of Mind, Hegel argues that the struggle for recognition that occurs in objectification cannot culminate in genuine integration between humans and their world, the objectifying consciousness, although an advance over previous stages of human consciousness, remains an alienated consciousness that does not feel at home with the surroundings on which it depends. For the objectifying or enlightenment consciousness, nature is mere matter devoid of any subjectivity. The objectifying subject defines the natural environment as a pure object and thus experiences no identity or commonality with the world with which he or she is obliged to relate. Conceived as "man's absolute other, nature is necessarily denuded of any qualities that might enable human beings to see something of

1. Alberto Melucci, "The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Movements", Social Research (Vol 52, No 4, Winter 1985) p. 811.

themselves in it. The objectifying consciousness is thus estranged from the very beginning from the natural world on which it depends."²

Humans confront an alien, threatening opponent and struggle to defeat it, to rob it of its independent existence. But this struggle is "always unsuccessful, since the goal of the complete subjugation of nature inevitably eludes those who pursue it."³ Hegel's concept of Absolute Knowledge explains that, only human beings have the capacity of "self-consciousness." Therefore the relation between man and nature is neither instrumental nor utilitarian.

Human societies Gadgil⁴ writes, "are strongly dependent on their resource base. Changes in this base, in technologies and social modes of resource-use and the conflicts which arise over access to resources are important elements of human history." While writing on the ecological history of Indian subcontinent he has made an attempt in giving a chronological picture of how ecological transformation took place in different phases. This is as follows:

1. The period from 1,00,000 B.C. to 5,000 B.C.: The population was basically of hunter-gatherer type. Their main concentration was in the semi-arid and arid zones.

2. Issac D. Balbus, "A Neo-Hegelian, Feminist, Psycho-analytic Perspective on Ecology", Telos (No. 52, Summer, 1982) p. 141

3. Ibid, p. 142

4. Madhav Gadgil, "Towards an Ecological History of India", Economic and Political Weekly, (Special Number 1985) p. 1909

There was an increasing pressure over the land due to a population explosion. As a result, there was loss in productivity of land.

From the above analysis, one could guess that the pre-colonial Indian society had a tradition of prudent use of forest resources. But with the arrival of the British such traditions got a jolt. The British realized the commercial value of forests and in the name of conservation of forests they tried to regulate people's rights over them and started collecting revenue.

Ramachandra Guha⁵ in his study stresses that, 'the crucial watershed in the history of Indian forestry is undoubtedly the building of the railway network'. Three Indian varieties of timber namely teak, sal and deodar were extensively used for the above purpose. This shows, Britishers. on the one hand used the Indian forests as one of the major sources of raw materials and on the other hand they retained their control over the forest resources. As a result, the native population got restricted in using the forest.

One important difference between the pre- 1947 and post-1947 situation is that, in the latter period, there has been a rapid growth of forest-based industries namely paper, plywood, rubber, soap, match etc. The approach on forest produce was changed from "conservation-oriented approach" to "economically

5. Ramachandra Guha, "Forestry in British and Post-British India: A Historical Analysis", Economic and Political Weekly, (October 29, 1983) p. 1883.

attractive resources" approach. This resulted in giving preference to large-scale plantations of fast-growing commercially viable species. This dynamic "production" forestry, which has accelerated since the sixties, has had its mainspring the trend towards replacing existing forests poorly stocked over large areas with those of fast-growing commercial species.

The development of transport and communications in the forest areas gave the contractors ample opportunities to transport the produce from the forests to industry areas. Then, came the phase of monoculture through which species like teak, pines and eucalyptus were encouraged with the narrow objectives of profit maximization.

In a study of Indian institute of Foreign Trade, a clear picture has been drawn, how. the forest has been exploited over the years. This has been presented in a chart given below:

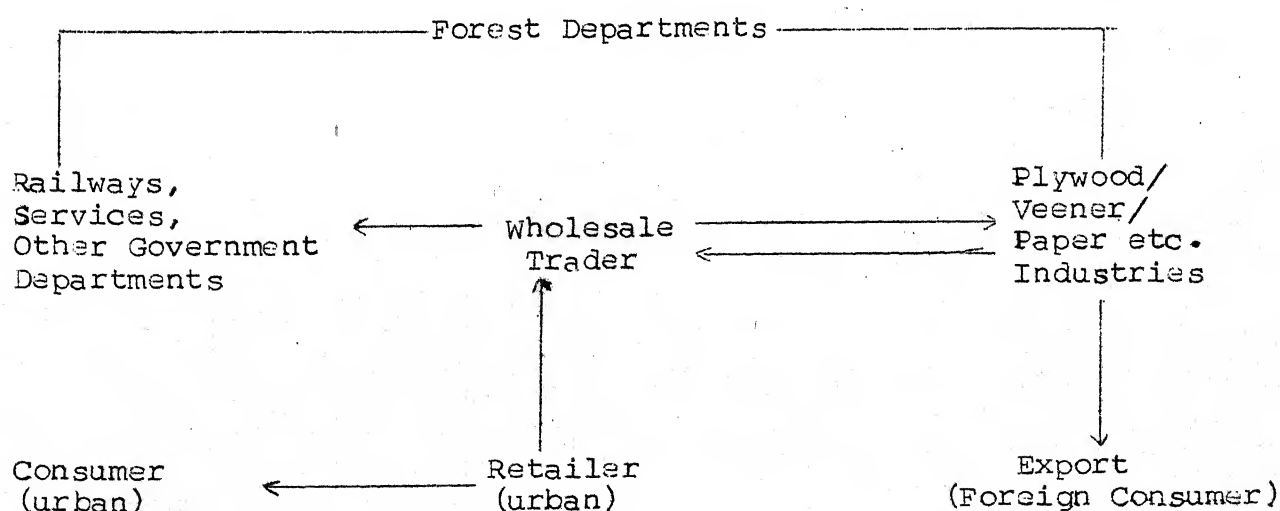


Table No.1:

Source: Ram Chandra Guha; "Forestry in British and Post-British India: A Historical Analysis, Economic and Political Weekly (October 29, 1983) p. 1883.

As a result of increased forest exploitations, the forest communities have lost control over their habitat. This has lead to fuelwood crisis in the rural areas. To overcome the above crisis, a Social Forestry programme was launched. This involved the raising of large scale fuelwood plantations in the rural areas. Instead of meeting the needs of firewood in rural areas, the social forestry gave ample opportunities to the rich farmers to plant Eucalyptus, used as a raw material by the paper industry. This process has aggravated the rural inequalities in atleast two ways: first, by reducing the demand for labour, and second, by forcing the poor to buy cereals, previously being obtained at least partly in kind at a greater real cost in the market.⁶

4.1 Forest Legislations in India and its Impact on the Environment

Before the advent of the British in India, there was only customary regulation of people's rights over forest lands and forest produce. This did not pose "any problem due to the existence of vast tracts of forests and small population."⁷ Cultural practices of ecological prudence also prohibited cutting down certain species.

Acceptance of such practices of ecological prudence institutionalized with the help of a notion of sacredness

6. Ibid., p. 1892.

7. Sharad Kulkarni, "The Forest Policy and the Forest Bill: A Critique and Suggestions for Change" in Walter Fernandes and Sharad Kulkarni's (ed.) Towards a New Forest Policy: People's Rights and Environmental Needs, (New Delhi: Indian Social Institute 1983) p. 84.

apparently did not guarantee long term sustainability of all resources supporting human populations, although it may have significantly contributed to such a goal.

The Imperial Forest Department was formed in 1864 and the first act to give effect to rules for management and preservation of government forest was passed in 1865. The act empowered the government to declare any land covered with trees, brushwood or jungle as government forest by notification, of individuals or communities (Section 2). The act also envisages that the right of entry into forests should be restricted in the national interest.

The above act was, however, criticized because of the following fallacies in it: (i) The act in many ways, prohibits the use of forest but does not lay down anything regarding its management. (ii) The act does not prescribe anything regarding fire protection and fencing. (iii) The provisions regarding transit seems to be less exclusive. (iv) The penalties prescribed for forest offences seem to be less comprehensive.

Apart from the above lapses, there were ambiguities regarding proprietary right of the state.

The Indian Forest Act 1878 was promulgated after repealing the Government Forest Act 1865. This act was a more comprehensive one and it divided the forests into (1) Reserved forests, (2) protected forests, and (3) village forests.

The 1878 Act envisaged a forest settlement whenever a reserved forest was to be constituted. It outlined an

elaborate procedure for the settlement of the respective rights, of "private persons" and government, in the land being reserved.⁸ A Forest Settlement Officer was appointed by the state to be empowered to acquire land over which rights were claimed by persons. He has also to publish such rights in local language stating the limits of the forests to be reserved. Special provisions like, number of cattle to be grazed, headloads of fuel allowed per family etc. were specified in the act to ensure the exercise of such rights. Certain acts like pasturing of cattle were prohibited in the reserved forests. The local governments under this act were given power to make rules to regulate and prohibit certain acts in protected forests. The act also made several provisions for the imposition of duty on timber.

A more modified and comprehensive act called 'Indian Forest Act, 1927' replaced the Indian Forest Act of 1878. The Government of India Act of 1935 included the subject of forests in the provincial legislative list.

The National Forest Policy of 1952 seems to be an extension of the earlier British policies and acts. According to Kulkarni:⁹

There is an explicit assertion in the policy that the claims of communities living in and near forests should not override national interests. The destruction

8. Ramachandra Guha, op. cit., p. 1941.

9. Sharad Kulkarni, op. cit., p. 89.

of forests for the construction of roads, building of irrigation and hydroelectricity projects, ammunition factories and other projects was justified in the name of national interest whereas cultivation of lands shown as forest lands without any actual tree cover was treated as encroachment.

The National Commission on Agriculture (1976) in its report on forestry (Part IX) gives emphasis on the commercialization of agriculture. This has been reflected in the following lines of the report:

Free supply of forest produce to the rural population and their rights and privileges have brought destruction to the forests and so it is necessary to reverse the process. The rural people have not contributed much towards the maintenance or regeneration of the forests. Having over-exploited the resources, they cannot in all fairness expect that somebody else will take the trouble of providing them with forest produce free of charge.¹⁰

The commission recommends that all forest lands should be classified into three categories: Protected forests, production forests and social forests. The production forests are given more priorities because of their commercial value.

On the basis of the recommendations of the National Commission on Agriculture, the Indian Forest Bill, 1980 was passed. The Bill classifies the forests into following categories: reserved forests, protected forests and village forests. The Bill emphasizes forest protection not for the people but from the people.

After analyzing the above forest legislations we infer that the post-colonial legislations on forests are a mere

10. Ibid., p. 90.

extension of the pre-colonial legislations and are inconsistent with the national policies promulgated by the government and the constitutional law.

Chhatrapati Singh¹¹, while discussing about the environmental law feels that these laws should involve such socio-legal research that will serve the purpose of the 'insiders' that is building a just nation. Social action groups concerned with forest law and administration must continue to protest against the mode of policy and law-making. That mode, must as a matter of principle, involve participation by affected groups.

4.2 Factors Leading to Ecology Movements in India

With the years passing the population, forest communities have sensed a loss of control over their habitat. They feel alienated from their own land. The huge expansion of resource-consuming industrialization have threatened the survival of the native population. The worst sufferers in this case are the poor and the deprived sections of the population.

The ecology micro-movements which are coming up are nothing but people's response to this threat.

A large number of voluntary groups in the country are showing concern on environmental issues which range from saving the forest from destruction, protect agricultural lands threatened by inundation, waterlogging and salinity resulting

11. Chhatrapati Singh, "Law Ecology and Poverty"; Seminar (No. 330, February 1987) p. 27.

from the construction of large dams, protect marine resources, prevent water pollution etc.

According to Vandana Shiva¹², ecological conflicts, regardless of where they take place and how they are conducted, have things in common, they all centre round the right of access of the poor to natural resources, and they all have three aspects. Such as:

1. Economic: Conflict between two types of economic activity — one aimed at ensuring survival for the people in a sustainable manner through a genuinely collective management; and the other aimed at maximizing the growth rate even at the cost of bare survival of many.

2. Technological: Conflict between two types of technology — vernacular and labor-intensive, one aimed at minimizing ecological costs to ensure survival; and the other borrowed from abroad regardless of its suitability in the local context, aimed at "modernization" of the productive process.

3. Scientific: Conflict in the politics of knowledge — one open to all, non-dogmatic, not ruling out other ways of acquiring knowledge; and the other a closed system, drawing a sharp dividing line between the expert and the non-expert.

The present study has focussed upon such a micro-movement that is taking place in the Western Ghat. Before

12. Vandana Shiva, "Ecology Movements in India", Alternatives (Vol. XI, 1986) p. 271.

describing the nature of the movement, we have tried to explain the ecological setting of the area.

4.3 Western Ghats, the People and the State of Ecology

The Western Ghat belt, which stretches from Gujrat to Kerala, plays a crucial role in maintaining the environmental stability of the Deccan Plateau. Important rivers of the South like Krishna, Kaveri and Tunga Bhadra originate from the thick forests of Western Ghats.

Uttara Kannada District in Karnataka, which encompasses the Western Ghat covers five Forest Territorial Divisions viz., Karwar, Honavar, Sirsi, Yellapur and Haliyal. This district is situated between $13^{\circ} - 55'$ and $15^{\circ} - 31'$ of North Latitude and between $74^{\circ} - 9'$ and $75^{\circ} - 10'$ of East Longitude. The total geographical area of the District is 10291.00 sq. kms. It has 11 talukas and 13,038 villages.

In this district, more than 80% of the total geographical area is covered under forests. The total forest areas are divided into following types:

1. Reserve Forest (Proper)	6,20,218.30 hectares
2. Minor Forest	1,52,085.60 "
3. Betta Lands	51,121.40 "
4. Hakkals	3,173.10 "
5. Village Forests	2,617.60 "
Total	<hr/> 8,29,215.00 hectares

Table No. 2

Source: Report on Integrated Approach for Eco-Development of Uttara Kannada District, (Karnataka Forest Department 1986) p. 1.

These forests have been enriched with rich genetical diversity of rare flora and fauna. The local species which beautify the forest areas as well as fulfill the basic needs of the people of the area are Matti (*Terminalia tomentosa*), Tare (*Terminalia belerica*), Kindal (*Terminalia paniculata*), Nandi (*Lagerstroemia lanceslata*), Honne (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), sissum (*Dalbergia latifolia*), Jamun (*Syzygium cumini*), Hebbalsu (*Artocarpus hirsuta*), Hadanga (*Cordia macleodii*), Heddi (*Adina cordifolia*), Kalam (*Mitragyna parviflora*), Boga (*Hymenodictyon excelsum*), Gandhagarige (*Toonaciliata*), Kalgarge (*Chukrassia tabularis*), Gojjal (*Lannea grandis*) etc.

The villagers of Uttara Kannada District depend mainly on forests in the following ways:

(a) Fuelwood: Fuelwood is one of the major sources of energy for the villagers. According to a study¹³ by the forest department, the monthly per capita consumption of energy for Uttara Kannada is (i) for rural household 73.35 kgs. and (ii) urban household 66.39 kgs.

(b) Fodder: According to the Forest Department of the District, there is enormous pressure on nearby forests so far as the fodder requirement for the cattle of the villagers are concerned. The grazing pressure on the forests of Uttara Kannada District is more than seven times of the carrying capacity of the forests. The data below shows how there is

13. Report on Integrated Approach for Eco-Development of Uttara Kannada District (Karnataka Forest Department, 1986) p. 5.

enormous pressure on the forest so far as the fodder requirement is concerned.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Kind	Live stock population (1981 census)	Body weight per animal unit kg.	Total Body weight lakh kg.	Daily/Fodder requirement 2% of colm. 4 lakh kg.	Annual/(Dry) Fodder requirement lakh Tonne
Cattle	392730	200	787.46	15.71	5.734
Buffalo	100786	260	262.04	5.24	1.913
				Total	7.647
				or say	7.650
(a) Availability of fodder from 1.09 lakh ha.					1.09 lakh Tonne
(b) Availability of fodder from improved fodder farms					0.56 " "
Balance requirement to be met from forests					6.00 " "

Table No.3

Source: Report on Integrated Approach for Eco-Development of Uttara Kannada District (Karnataka Forest Department, 1986) p. 11.

(c) Green manure: Majority of the villagers in the district use green manure for the cultivation of arecanut, their main commercial crop. They collect green manure by lopping the trees from bettas and minor forests. In an ideal situation, the villagers should use only the fallen dry leaves, but in actual practice, they sometimes cut the branches

mercilessly. As a result, many trees die. Recently, the villagers have agreed to cut the branches once in five years so that the trees can be preserved longer.

(d) Religious needs: The species which meet the religious needs of the villagers are Khair, Pipal, Shami, Champak, Vata Vriksha, Mandara, Bilva Patra, Agasthya etc. Efforts have been made to set up sacred groves known as 'Pavitra Vana' where the above species have been grown.

(e) Medicine: The villagers depend a lot on the medicinal plants grown in the forests. The forest department has identified some of the species having medicinal value. They are locally known as Vajaman, Chakrani, Garudpatal, Savir Sambar, Samvarda beru, Apathe, Uttrane, Ondclaga, Bharang raj, Majjige hullu, etc.

For all the above needs, the villagers by and large depend on forests. At this juncture, forest officials have got opportunities to blame the villagers for destroying forests. Poverty, and over population are two major factors considered to be responsible for environmental degradation in the villages. But what is not accepted by the forest officials are that the villagers have no options.

The space that they occupy and the resources that they have been using, have been gradually taken away from them and no additional resources are provided. With the depletion of forests, "alternative energy sources have not been made available to the poor..... it should, therefore, be clear that

there are factors other than poverty and population which are responsible for the pollution of the earth."¹⁴ The extension of this idea has been explained by Guha¹⁵ in the following words: "while the rich destroy the environment - indirectly through exploitation of nature for profit - the poor are often forced to fall back upon nature for their very survival, thereby using up resources in an unsustainable fashion."

Indian forests are being destroyed by commercial interests in pursuit of short-term goals of profit maximization, and to a lesser extent by rural communities for whom the loss of control over natural resources has led to an alienation of man from forest with potentially damaging consequences.

It is at this point, we need to understand the genesis of a mass movement like Appiko Chaluvali (Movement).

4.4 The Appiko Chaluvali

For the first time in the history of Indian Forests, the British adopted the policy of large scale cutting of trees for commercial interests like building up of the railway lines. Great chunks of forest was destroyed in the Western Ghats to meet the demand for railway sleepers. The Britishers, with a

14. Duna Roy, "Politics of Environment-I", in State of India's Environment; A Citizen's Report, (New Delhi Centre for Science and Environment 1985) p. 355.

15. Ramchandra Guha, op. cit., p. 1893.

view to control this resource, took away the community right over forests.

One of the earliest recorded people's movement in the Western Ghats, against forest take-over was in 1831. This movement continued till 1837. Subsequently, the movement was repressed with the help of soldiers.

The year from (1930 - 34) saw another movement, popularly known as, "Jungle Satyagraha" in the region. This movement vehemently opposed the British Forest Policy, which was based on exploiting forest wealth to meet the growing demand of the industries in the nearby cities. This was a non-violent movement in the form of satyagraha. The movement was partially successful, as a result of which, the villagers of the area got certain concessions known as "Kanara Privileges". According to this privilege, for every acre of land a farmer owns, the government gives eight acres of forest lands known as 'Betta Lands' free of cost. Only the green manure from these could be utilized.

The existing forest policies and acts seem to be nothing but an extension of the British forest policies. At present, clearfelling of natural forests to raise mono-cultural plantations like teak and eucalyptus are being practiced in the name of eco-development and social forestry.

The Britishers, had provided betta lands to the farmers in order to encourage cash crops like black-pepper, Cardamum, arecanut, Coffee in that area which were in greater demand

at that time. After the Britishers left, the concept of large food production and plantation of selected trees like eucalyptus and teak were evolved by the government to meet the growing food and fuel need of the people respectively. Large-scale hydro-electric projects were also started in the village areas to meet the power need of the new industries and agricultural projects.

All the above reasons created a conducive environment and people became ecologically conscious. It's when the Bedhti hydel dam was under construction in the Uttara Kannada District, the idea of fighting to save the forest land gained momentum among the people of the area.

At this moment, the people of the area feel that the erratic rains have affected agricultural yield. This results in large-scale soil erosion, leading to silting of tanks and dams, eventually affecting irrigation pattern. It also causes flash floods.

The plantation of teak and eucalyptus leave the fields dry. The cattle does not get enough fodder. The modus operandi of felling trees reveals an insatiable greed and a blatant disregard for propriety.

Going through the difficult time, on September 8, 1983 the members of Laxminarasimha Youth Club in Salkani, a village in Sirsi taluk decided to launch a peaceful agitation against the indiscriminate clearfelling in the nearby Kalase forest.

The threat to survival having become more sinister, the response of the people has changed. Sporadic protests have become organized and sustained movements.¹⁶ Appiko Chaluvali in Uttara Kannada District is one of these movements whose main objectives are to promote harmonious relationship between men and nature with its threefold objective of Ulisu, Belasu and Balasu which implies preservation, restoration and regeneration and rational use of forest resources.

Five hundred years ago, Amrita Devi, a lady of Bishnoi Sect in Rajasthan hugged a khejari tree and prevented the axemen of Maharaja Abhay Singh from cutting it. It is the Bishnoi's that inspired Sunderlal Bahuguna to launch the Chipko Andolan in the North to save the Himalayan forests. Inspired by 'Chipko', the people of Uttara Kannada launched the 'Appiko' the Kannada version of 'Chipko'.

After getting the information that axemen are cutting trees, 160 men and women from Salkani village entered the tree-felling area and hugged the trees and thereby prevented the axemen from cutting the trees. That is how the peaceful agitation, popularly known as "appiko" started in Uttara Kannada District.

For 40 long days, about 30 to 40 villagers were present in the area to guard the trees. Finally the axemen left the area and the villagers proved to be victorious.

16. Vandana Shiva, op. cit., p. 262.

It is at this point that, Pandurang Hegde came to the scene. While, he was a student of Delhi school of Social Work, he came in contact with Sunderlal Bahuguna and spent sometime with him in the forests of Himalayas. He explained to the youth club members of Salkani, spearheading the movement, the philosophy of the Chipko movement. Being a native of the area, he has a distinct advantage of understanding the problems of the people.

Pandurang Hegde spearheads the Parisara Sanrakshana Kendra (Environmental Protection Centre) an organisation whose head office is situated in Sirsi, a taluka of Uttara Kannada District. Claiming himself to be an organiser and not leader, he believes in decentralisation, whereby more activists and groups will emerge and will work with total freedom.

Parisara Samrakshana Kendra, (hereafter PSK) is an informal organisation, having its office at Sirsi. There is no formal enrolment into it. It's not a registered body either. The group in Sirsi has about fifteen activists.. Their main aim is to develop leadership in the village, where the movement is taking a positive mode. The basic idea behind such a move is to build confidence in these groups so that they will not be dependent on external assistance to solve their problems.

The major demands of the PSK are the following:

- (1) The present forest policy of the government should be reoriented in such a way that it will be able to control

the exploitation of forest wealth.

(2) There should be a long moratorium on commercial felling of trees and mono-culture plantations.

(3) The laterisation process should be halted on a war footing by planting trees on the denuded land.

(4) Forest-based industries in the area should be closed down.

The main objectives of the organisation are threefold i.e., (i) to save the existing forest cover, (ii) to grow trees in denuded/fallow land and (iii) utilize the forest wealth with due care to conservation. This can be achieved through propagation of new chullahs, finding alternatives to fuelwood, regulation in lopping of green leaves etc.

Funds are collected locally to run the organisation. At present, the PSKs have been able to spread their message in three districts of Karnataka namely North Kanara, Shimoga and South Kanara. Their target is to spread, as Pandurang Hegde claims 'the whole of Western Ghats, where the tropical forest is in real danger'.

4.5 Techniques Adopted in Appiko Chaluvali

In their efforts to mobilize public opinion and prompt public action, the PSKs have adopted traditional art forms of Karnataka namely Yakshagana. The consequences of deforestation is presented by the volunteers playing the roles of mythologica

characters such as Parvata Raja, Prayag Raja, Nisaraga Chakravarti Yogaraja, Pragatti etc.

The young volunteers propagate the message of Appiko through street plays. Apart from this, the village girls volunteers, writing poems and folk songs on the theme of Appiko (see the Appendix).

4.6 The Sample Villages: Salkani and Gubigadde

Salkani and Gubbigadde are two small villages of Sirsi taluka in Uttara Kannada District where I have tried to study the nature of participation by the villagers in Appiko Chaluvali.

Appiko Chaluvali, the Chipko experiment in this District, is based on Gandhian Satyagraha. Though, initiated by Shri Laxmi Narasimha Yuvak Mandala of Salkani, in 1983, it is with the active role played by Pandurang Hegde of PSK, the villagers of the above two villages participated in it with alacrity.

In both the villages, Havyaka Brahmins are the dominant castes, People of other castes like Namdari Naiks, Shettys, Vokkaligas and Scheduled Castes also reside there. Among the dominant castes, very few farmers are rich but almost all of them have some amount of lands. It is not the case with the people of other castes. Majority of the landless labourers are from the backward castes.

The table No. 4 shows the distribution of population and their occupations in the two villages:

characteristic of the Parvata Raja, Prayag Raja Nisaraga Chakravart
Chakra, Prayag, Prayag etc

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4.6 The Two Villages Salkani and Gubbigadde

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The table No 4 shows the distribution of population and their occupations in the two villages

Name of the village	No of family		Population		Percentage of population	
	Farmer	Landless labourers	Farmers	Landless labourers	Farmers	Landless labourers
1 Salkanı	25	25	343	152	69 29	30 70
2 Gubbıgadde	43	15	464	87	-	-

Table No 4

Source The Office of the Tehsildar, Sirsi

Land distribution pattern in the two villages show, how the forests play an important role in the life of the villagers

Name of the village	Areas covered by forests (in acres)	Paddy grown (in acres)	Arecanut grown (in acres)	Others (in acres)	Total area (in acres)
Salkanı	333	17	44	157	551
Gubbıgadde	994	76	37	90	1197

Table No 5

Source The office of the Tehsildar, Sirsi

Paddy and arecanut are the two main crops cultivated by the villagers. Apart of these two crops, Sugarcane, Mango, Pepper, Coconut, Cardamom etc are also cultivated,

In both the villages, forests cover the major chunk of the total areas. The forests constitute the reserve forests, minor forests, betta lands, Hakkals and village forests. The reserve forests and minor forests are exclusively managed by the forest department. Betta lands are protected forests granted to arecanut garden owners. They use this for procuring green manure, firewood, etc. Hakkals are type of forest areas granted by the Britishers for the practice of shifting cultivation by certain communities. The village forests are taken care of by the villagers themselves.

The working plan of the forest department reveals an alarming trend. In the Hulekal Range under which both the sample villages fall, in the coupe (tree felling area) no. 20 which consists of 34.40 hectares, 3,675 trees were proposed to be felled in 1983. This means, only 580 trees were to survive. This shows, how the contractors have a high handedness on the reserve forest itself.

It was found that, majority of the cultivators apply green manure and very few use chemical fertilizers. It was also found that, out of 40 people interviewed, 23 had lands for cultivation out of which only 8 people had electric pump sets. Rest of the cultivators depend on rain.

The villagers mainly depend on forest and forest products such as fuelwood, green manure, medicine, timber for building of house or agricultural equipments. Our study shows that out of 40 people interviewed, only 7 people have go-bar gas

as a source of fuel rest of them use firewood as fuel This shows that, the dependence of the villagers on forests for fuelwood is enormous

The dependence of the villagers on forest for their basic survival motivated the people of the area to start the Appiko Chaluvali Natural plants of the forest are felled to plant eucalyptus for the pulp industry However, the needs of pulp-based industry cannot be satisfied without turning renewable land and vegetational resources into non-renewable ones

The main objective of forest management is to provide raw material to forest-based industries and to earn maximum revenue But it brings changes in micro and macro climate affecting rainfall and eventually the agriculture

Our study shows that the people of this area feel the following factors are the cause of deforestation in the area.

Sl No	Variable	Do you think, there has been large scale deforestation in your area over the years	No of respondents	Ratio
1	Yes	Because of		
		(a) lack of awareness among the villagers	5	0.125
		(b) Large-scale cutting of trees by forest contractors	11	0.275
		(c) Irresponsible act of forest department	7	0.175
		(d) Excessive use of forest by the villagers	8	0.2

contd .

	(c) Large-scale fire	2	0 05
	(f) Commercial plantations/ mono-culture.	2	0 05
	(g) other factors	3	0 075
2	No	1	0 025
3	No No Response	1	0 025
<hr/>			
4	Total	40	1.000

Table No 6

Our study shows that, people in general feel the devastating nature of deforestation which in turn threatens their environment.

In the table No 7 we find out that, the appiko chaluvali has made an impact among the people. Out of 40 people interviewed, only 3 people feel that, appiko has failed to make any impact on the people. Majority of them, however, feel that, appiko has not only given them confidence to fight against clearfelling, but also it encourages them to plant new saplings in the barren area and to develop nursery where local species can be nurtured.

Sl No	Variable	Why/how do you feel, "Appiko" can bring change in your area	No of respondents	Ratio
1	Yes	(a) Gives confidence among people to fight against injustice	4	0.1
		(b) Creates awareness among the villagers to protect the forest	10	0.25
		(c) Motivates people to save the forest from "clear felling"	4	0.1
		(d) Creates awareness among the people to develop the forest through plantation of new saplings/develop nursery etc	7	0.175
		(e) Because of its efforts, forest department is now taking keen interest in developing the forest	2	0.05
		(f) Creates a sense of minimal use of forest among villagers	2	0.05
		(g) Others	4	0.1
2.	No	It has not brought any change	3	0.075
3	No	Response	4	0.1
4	Total		40	1.000

Table No 7

Pandurang Hegde the PSK activist claims that the Britishers had no knowledge of managing tropical forests. The same knowledge based was accepted by foresters even after independence. Thus the main thrust was on removal of tropical forests and to raise monocultural plantations. The removal of mixed species of forests have caused irreversible damage to the eco-systems. The poorest lot who are staying amidst forest have become the worst victims of this so called "scientific management".

The people of the sample villages have realized that big hydro-electric projects and large-scale forest-based industries have caused a lot of damage to the forests and the people of the area. The table No 8 shows the reactions of the people regarding the setting up of hydro-electric projects and industries in their area.

The Bedthi Dam project in the District has made the people aware of the consequences of setting up of bigger hydro-electric projects in the area. Recently an agreement has been made with the Harihar Polyfibres, by which the government has earmarked 75 000 acres of thickly forested Malnad region of the Western Ghats for the purpose of providing eucalyptus to the company. The open cast mining in the region has dried up the river course. The caustic soda factory has polluted the sea. The Paper Mill has polluted the river. This in turn has affected the common people.

Sl No	Variable	Reaction about setting up of Hydro-electric projects and Industries in the area	No of respondents	Ratio
1	Yes	(a) It provides employment	4	0.1
		(b) Industries provide essential things	4	0.1
		(c) In favor of small-scale industries	1	0.025
		(d) In favor of mini-hydel projects	2	0.05
		(e) In favor of solar-based/wind-based energy projects	7	0.175
2	No	(a) It causes large-scale destruction of forests	1	0.025
		(b) Big hydro-electric projects cause earth-quake	2	0.05
		(c) As big hydro-electric projects submerge large quantity of lands and result large-scale displacement of the people from the area	5	0.125
3		In favor of Industries but not in favor of hydro-electric projects	3	0.075
4		In favor of hydro-electric projects and not in favor of industry	2	0.05
5		others	3	0.075
6		No response	6	0.15
7		Total	40	1.000

Table No 8

The people who are in favour of big hydro-electric projects and industries are mostly the landless labourers who feel that this will provide them employment. It's not that they are against the small-scale industries or mini-hydel projects, but they feel that bigger projects will open up better employment opportunities.

Irrespective of their caste, status, age, sex and living opportunities, majority of the villagers, however, feel that 'appiko' is a good initiative in checking deforestation in the area.

Sl No	Variable	Feeling about 'appiko' Is it a good initiative	No of respondents	Ratio
1	Yes	(i) Increasing awareness among the villagers.	14	0.350
		(ii) Emerging sense of unity and collectivity	4	0.1000
		(iii) Increasing government's initiative in developing the forest	3	0.075
		(iv) Checking of deforestation/clearfelling	12	0.300
		(v) Organized protest was possible due to it	2	0.050
		(vi) Others	1	0.025
2	No	Forest department has become more rude and strict	2	0.050
3	No	No response	2	0.050
4	Total		40	1.000

Table No 9

As the table No 9 shows, the people feel that the initiative of 'abpiko' has brought a sense of unity among the people and it gives confidence to fight against injustice. By the impact of which, the forest department has also started taking keen interest in afforestation programmes.

Clearfelling has stopped in the region due to its initiative. Now people are in a position to lodge protest in an organised way.

A significant number of respondents feel that to some extent, the villagers are also (directly or indirectly) responsible for deforestation. Our study shows that the main dependence factor of the villagers on forest is for fuelwood. It may be noted here that for a common villager, there is no option left but to depend on forest for this purpose.

Another interesting finding of our study is that only two out of forty respondents feel that commercial plantations are responsible for deforestations. They reported that whether or not the plantations of commercial species like eucalyptus, teak, acacia etc. are responsible for deforestations, cannot be said with certainty. But they strongly feel that these plantations have failed to fulfill their basic needs like food, fodder, fuel, fertilizer and fibre.

The villagers, however, strongly oppose the plantation of commercial species like eucalyptus, acacia and teak in their area. They give the following reasons against the above plantations: (1) The leaves of eucalyptus have a very

bad smell (ii) The cattle bleed by smelling it as it produces lot of heat, (iii) it dries up the soil

At present the villagers with the help of PSK are developing nurseries in their villages species of local varieties are nurtured there The main aim behind this is to grow as trees in the denuded/fallow land as possible

To utilize properly the forest wealth, the PSK is developing fuel-efficient chullahs (a small stove) and propagating alternative sources of energy

From the above study we assume that the people of the area feel that their goal will be achieved if the following factors are taken into consideration

(i) With the adoption of "modernization" of productive process through social forestry by the government, the very survival of the common people is threatened

(ii) In the present state of affairs, there is a need to save the existing forest, grow more and more trees in the denuded land and utilize the forest wealth with due care to conservation

(iii) Clearfelling of trees should be stopped The forest legislations should be more strict to deal with the illegal forest contractors.

(iv) Nurseries should be set up in the villages to encourage the nurturing of local species

articulation of a frame-work for an alternative forestry science which is ecological and can safeguard the public interest¹⁸

The efforts of PSK to start forest movements like "Appiko" is remarkable because of its emphasis on decentralized political power, the survival of species, establishing good relations among human being and nature and also a peaceful coexistence at all levels. Though these movements start from a specific condition or location, they have global implications. The ecological culture developed through these efforts give us an opportunity to deal with nature inside and outside of ourselves.

¹⁸ Ibid , p 38

CIVIL LIBERTIES MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

5 1 The State Civil Society and Theory

In the West, the civil society is found to be differentiated from the modern state through its democratic revolutions and ongoing social movements. The key features of this civil society are legality (private law, civil, political, social, equality and rights), plurality (autonomous self-constituted voluntary associations) and publicity (spaces of communication, public participation, reflections on and articulation of political will and social norms).

According to Marx, all elements of civil society and the state are seen as bourgeois institutions, subordinated to the logic of the capitalist organisational principle. Contemporary Western social system, however, does not conform to this model on the following grounds:

(1) Economy is one of many sub-systems that constitute modern social system. Therefore, it is not necessary that the state is subordinated to the capitalist organisational principle only.

(11) Theorists of collective behavior have emphasized the complexity and importance of motives, need interpretations and worldviews that form social action. Therefore, social action based on class struggle is not the only alternative to social change.

(iii) The Marxist tradition has always emphasized upon an evolutionary perspective of society; the ultimate aim of which is a progress towards socialism. As a result of this progress the formal political institutions like the state, political parties and representation become obsolete. However, in the Western society this is described as an evolutionary optimism.

Further, the neo-Marxists are not critical of the state as their predecessors were. As a result, it gives an opportunity to evaluate the relationship between the state and civil society from a different perspective. At this point, "it is constantly stressed that the basis of a radical and socialist civil society should be a diversity of struggles prosecuted by a variety of overlapping but distinct popular groupings and alliances"¹ (Pierson, p. 5)

Claus Offe,² a system theorist while focussing on West European politics, suggests that, the period from the post-World War II till the early seventies was dominated by the "old paradigm". The main issues of this period were economic growth, distribution and security. But, the new social movements of the seventies have broken down the "old paradigm" and given rise to "new paradigm". This resulted in the

1 Christopher Pierson, "Democratic Institutions and Actors in the Public Sphere", Towards 'a Socialist and Pluralist Civil Society'? Paper presented in XI World Congress of Sociology (18-23 August 1986, New Delhi) p. 5.

2. Claus Offe, "New Social Movements Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics, Social Research, (Vol. 52, No. 4, Winter, 1985) pp. 817-868

following (i) diminishing faith in the welfare state consensus, (ii) delimiting the sphere of the action of the state, while politicizing the civil society in such a way that it remains more independent of the state regulation and intervention

The above postulates can be realised by (i) a redefinition of the relation between state and civil society, and (ii) elevation of a "non-institutional" politics. By non-institutional politics, Offe subsumes that "the means of action can be recognized as legitimate and the ends of action can become binding for the wider community"³,

Schema of Forms of Non-institutional Action

Ends Means/Actors	Not binding for wider community if accomplished	Binding
Not recognized by political community as legitimate	"private crime" 1	"terrorism" 2
Recognized as legitimate	Sociocultural movements advocating religious etc practices, "retreat" 3	"Sociopolitical movements" 4

Table No 1

Source: Clause Offe, "New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics", Social Research, (Vol 52, No 4, Winter, 1985) p 827

³ Ibid , pp 826-827

(iii) dealing with the problem of pluralism within a unitary state

Offe also explains that, if we define the concept of paradigm as a configuration of actors, issues, values and modes of action in sociopolitical conflict, we find a contrast picture between the "old paradigm" and the "new paradigm". This can be observed in Table No 2.

The Main Characteristics of the "old" and "new" Paradigms of Politics

	"Old Paradigm"	"New Paradigm"
Actors	Socioeconomic groups acting as groups (in the groups' interest) and involved in distributive conflict	Socioeconomic groups acting not as such, but on behalf of ascriptive collectivities
Issues	Economic growth and distribution, military and social security, social control	Preservation of peace, environment, human rights, and unalienated forms of work
Values	Freedom and security of private consumption and material progress	Personal autonomy and identity as opposed to centralized control & etc
Modes of action	(a) Internal: formal organization, large-scale representative associations (b) External: Pluralist or corporatist interest intermediation, political party competition, majority rule	(a) Internal: informality, spontaneity, low degree of horizontal and vertical differentiation (b) External: protest politics based on demands formulated in predominantly negative terms.

Table No 2

Source: Claus Offe, "New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics, Social Research, (Vol 52, No 4, Winter, 1985) p. 832.

From the discussion of Offe's new social movements following propositions can be stressed:

(1) Existence of the State is indispensable, however, its power is subject to delimitation and control

(2) Recognition of the existence of independent institutions within the civil society

(3) Emphasis upon the procedural and institutional elements of democracy

(4) Emphasis upon political plurality i.e., recognition of a variety of social institutions including voluntary organisations and community-based services

(5) Significance of the emerging social movements must be realised

(6) There is a need to recognise the necessity of alliances of liberating forces within a popular democratic struggle

(7) Need to promote "non-institutional" politics for a better civil society

Touraine, an action theorist considers civil society as the locus of action for social movements. Therefore he focusses upon the process of contestation over opposed reinterpretations of norms and new institutionalizations. In the words of Touraine,

Social movements are the process through which social identities are constituted, and the institutionalized norms and hierarchical stratification

system of a given social order, challenged Social movements do not "succeed" or "fail" only to the degree to which they become political movements posing the question of power. The proper object of partisan social theory, then, is to articulate the potentials and dynamics of social movements to enlarge the social space in which the content of norms and control over historicity is at issue ⁴

5.2 What is Civil Liberty

McCloskey defines "civil liberties" as "the personal rights and freedoms that are - or ought to be - respected by government". The terms 'civil rights' and 'civil liberties' are often used interchangeably, however, the significant difference between the two are that, the 'civil liberties' often denotes the rights of individuals whereas the 'civil rights' refers to the constitutional and legal status and treatment of minority groups that are marked off from the majority by race, religion or national origin.

As mentioned in the Table No 3, civil liberties can be described in terms of either positive rights or in terms of negative rights. Negative liberties can be described as the individual's right not to have something done to him. Negative liberties are traditional one and can be further sub-divided into (a) rights against interference by government and (b) rights against interference by private individuals or groups. Rights against governments are further divided into political

⁴ Alain Touraine, "The Voice and the Eye" (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981) p. 77

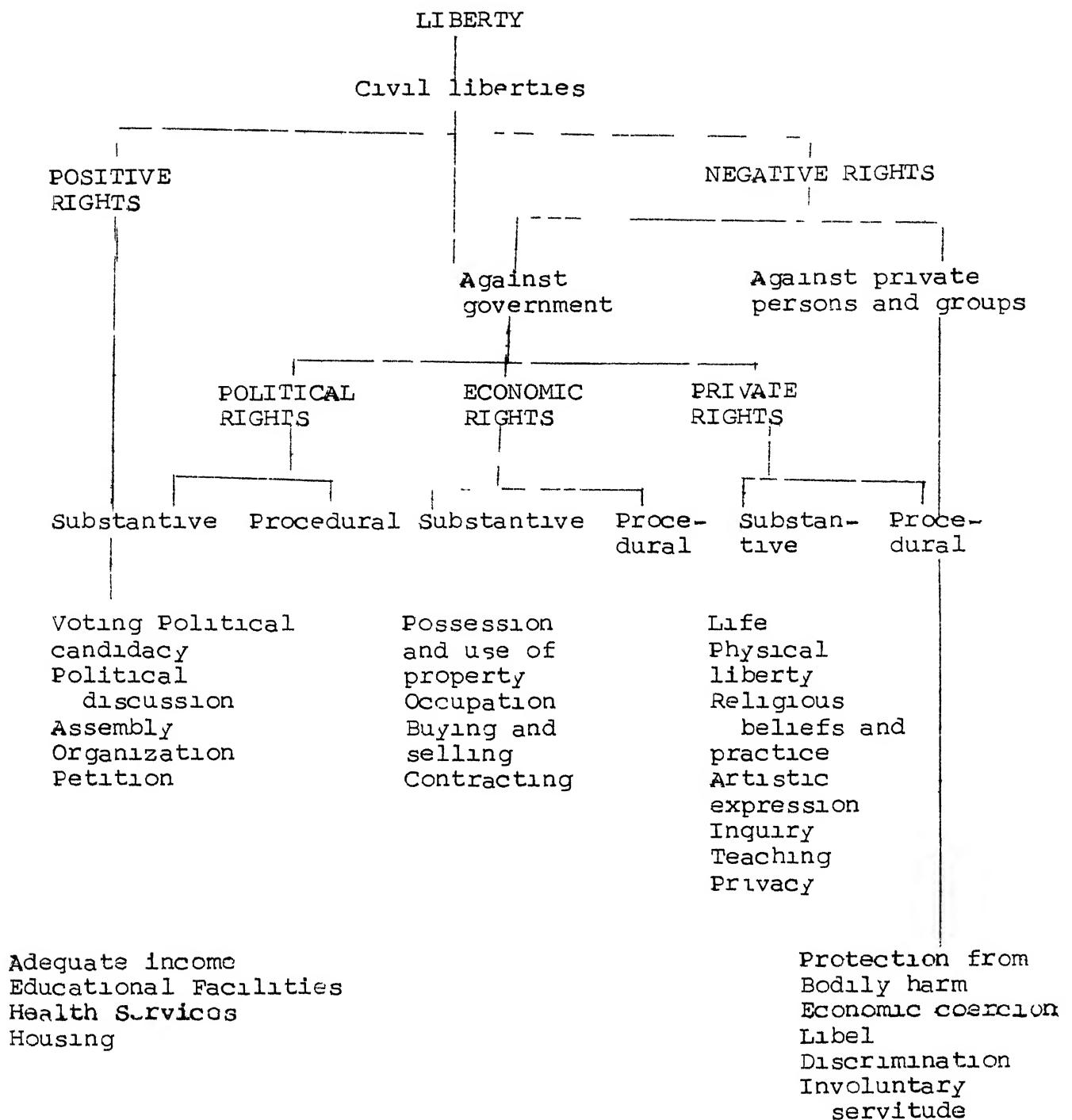


Table No 3

Source: Robert G McCloskey, "Constitutional Law: Civil Liberties," International Encyclopedia of Social Science (Vol 3, 1968) p. 308.

rights, economic rights and private rights. These rights are either substantive, i.e., end in themselves or procedural, i.e., way in which government must proceed in dealing with them.

Positive rights can be defined as individual's rights to have something done for him. Under these rights individual should have the facilities for education, health services, etc.

5.3 Civil Rights Movements in the United States

The Civil Rights Movement in the United States got its impetus from the following incidents:

(1) In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court decided in the case of *Brown vs Board of Education, Topeka* that schools segregated on the basis of race and purporting to provide separate but equal education were declared unconstitutional.

(11) In 1955, Rosa Parks, a black woman of Montgomery, Alabama refused to leave her bus seat to a white man and move to the black section where no seats were available. This led to a long boycott of the bus system by blacks.

The above incidents took place because the blacks were considered to be second-class citizens in the USA. The Civil Rights Movement began as a reformist movement. This movement started in the South of the United States as it was more populated by the Blacks. At that time the blacks realized that:

(1) They are treated as second-class citizens

(11) They are hardly allowed to exercise their voting power

(111) They are given education in substandard schools

(iv) They get less pay as compared to their white counterparts for the same job

Several organisations were formed, of which the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) became the most important black civil rights organisation in the United States from its creation in 1909 until the late 1950s. However, in the late fifties and early sixties, several other organisations emerged. Among them the significant ones are the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and the National Urban League (NUL).

The above Civil Rights Organisations concentrated on the following points as a form of strategy: (i) litigation and lobbying, (11) education, and (111) Direct action.

The litigation involves in bringing lawsuits against public and private institutions who were against the blacks. Lobbying includes registering the blacks on the voters list, and trying for federal and state legislations in their favour.

Education includes research on the scope and effects of discrimination provision of job training and negotiations with key economic institutions for an end to anti-black discrimination

Direct action which was a more radical step includes a variety of non-violent forms of protest that involves picketing, sit-ins and marches etc against those organisations who enforced institutional segregation at community and state levels

After the assassination of major black leaders like Martin Luther King Jr and Malcolm X, the movement was disintegrated to some extent Later in the mid-seventies this movement took different turns They are as follows

(i) A significant section of the movement became radical. They believed in complete transformation of the racist white society

(ii) Some groups took a Marxist position and argued that socialist or communist society is the only alternative

(iii) Some took an extreme step and argued in favour of black nationalism or separatism

Apart from the black movements the other movements which are prominent as Civil Rights Movements in the United States are the free speech movement, antiwar movement, antidraft movement, antinuclear movement, environmental movement and women's movement.

All the above movements have the following basic demands (i) certain basic economic, political and social rights to everyone, (ii) everyone should have basic freedom of speech, assembly and press

5 4 Development of Civil Rights Movement in India

In any society, economic, social and political oppression and human indignities lead to civil and democratic rights movement

During the independent struggle, Nehru had launched the Civil Liberties Union. In those days the civil and democratic rights associations had limited objective, that is giving legal aid to the nationalists accused of sedition against the British government.

The Civil Rights Movement in India in its present shape, owes its origin to the political milieu of the declaration of National Emergency. The Indians in the post-independent period strongly feel that, they face a crisis of national identity.

Kotnari, while analysing the post-independence political situation of the country writes

For quite some time after independence the country was governed by a middle class elite that was animated by a nationalist ethos which it tried to transmit to the common people around a number of rallying points. Among these were nation-building, planned development, socialist pattern, national self-reliance, non-alignment and more than all these, protection of diverse interests and identities.

within a common, transcendent Indian nationhood. This has since been weakened and rendered fragile and vulnerable, unable to 'hold' the 'various constituents of the nation-state together and open to a variety of cross-pressures and contradictory pulls and mutations.⁵

At this point he feels that the crisis of Indian nationalism arises due to the following factors

(i) In most parts of the Third World, nationalism emerged as a reaction to imperialism and was 'negative' to begin with after independence. Though this was corrected by the Gandhian impact to some extent in India, it had to compete with other ideological streams.

(ii) Socially, national liberation movement was middle class based. It lacked a social movement at the grassroots of Indian civilisation.

(iii) Indian identity always remained civilisational and not statist. There was no lasting concept of a 'nation-state'.

(iv) The concept of 'nation-state' adopted in the post-independence period was borrowed from the post-medieval 'scientific' West, which believed in one culture, one nation, one kingdom, and one dynasty. On the other hand, Indian civilization always believed in pluralist and fundamentally open and democratic ethos.

5 Rajni Kothari, "Need for a New National Movement", The Hindustan Times Sunday Magazine, (December 14, 1986) p 9

(v) over the years, the State poses to be more hegemonical, exploitative and distant from its own diverse peoples, cultures, and nationalities

The above factors have called for what Kothari says 'a new national movement', where people from all classes and cultural identities could participate

In recent years many intellectuals abandoning their academic life, have associated themselves with many action-groups and micro-movements. The main thrust of these groups lie in filling the wide political spaces outside the mainstream politics of parties and elections. In the words of D L Seth

"the search is for a politics that is in tune with the historical and cultural continuities of their own societies, a conception of politics based on the self-definition of a people the process of moving from micro-practice of transformative politics to a macro-conception of a new politics for the future has just begun "6

The emergency phase has given a new dimension to the political and democratic struggle in India. For the first time, organisations like Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL), Peoples' Union for Democratic Rights (PUDR) Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee (APCLC), Association for the Protection of Democratic Rights (APDR) have emerged. Most of these organisations bear the following characteristics

6 D L Seth, "Movements", Seminar, (278, October, 1982)
p 3

(i) 'Empowerment of the people' is their basic ideology

(ii) Raising the political consciousness of the people through setting up of people's own organisations and then preparing them to confront with the local power structure

(iii) Capture of state is not their ultimate goal but to fight against all the repressive structures of the society is their main objective

(iv) Their basic concern is towards the totality of the people's life, i.e. in political, social, economic and cultural sphere

In recent years, we see a divergence of perspective among various civil liberty groups. The changes found among various groups is an indication of their move towards a new politics for the future.

According to Seth⁷, these groups work under the following perspectives

(i) To work outside the established party structures

(ii) Their main aim is to work on issues and problems directly concerning the poor and downtrodden. In other words their aim is not to work for them but to work with them.

(iii) They strongly believe in democratic decentralisation of economic and political power.

7 D L Seth, 'Grass-roots Stirrings and the Future of Politics, Alternatives, (Vol IX, 1983) pp 1-24

(iv) Their view of the people is not instrumental i.e., people are not treated as an agency of revolution only

(v) To capture of State Power is not the prime goal of these groups

Considering the above characteristics, we can say that these groups are not anti-state but non-state not anti-party but non-party and also not anti-government but non-government in their functioning

The efforts of the above groups and organisations give a new direction to the civil and democratic rights movement in India

5.5 Lokayan: A Case Study

In the West, the grassroot initiatives and micro-movements focus on contemporary issues like peace, human rights, ecology, etc. It has been felt that these forms of collective action can have effects on political institutions. But the Third World countries, these movements are in their infancy.

In India, these grassroot initiatives are in the form of non-party political process. Their struggle is "for a variety of 'entitlements' - shelter and housing, and against arbitrary evictions of the poor in the cities, for the 'right to food' and nutrition, for protection against exploitation of children and women and bonded labourers in

the so-called 'informal' sector "8

Lokayan, as a civil liberty organisation tries to bring the action groups and micro-movements together in dialogue with academicians, intellectuals and journalists who have equal concern towards the struggling masses. After a meaningful dialogue between the above two groups, the members of the organisation investigate and analyse the issues concerned. Then the findings are discussed among the concerned people and the way for a frame-of-action is found.

What is Lokayan?

Lokayan literally means the movement of the people (Lok- the people, and Ayan - the way or the movement). Though in its initial phase it was in an evolving process, latter it turned out to be an organisation of concerned intellectuals, social activists and opinion makers.

Lokayan came into existence out of a critical analysis of the contemporary political, economic and social situations of the country.

If we try to analyse the various factors through which the contemporary action-groups and micro-movements, were evolved, then we can find out how the political, economic and social factors were responsible for it.

8. Rajni Kothari, "A Politics of the People", The Hindustan Times Sunday Magazine, (November 11, 1986)
p 9

With the breakdown of the old Congress Party, Indian polity began to sense a crisis. This also created constitutional deadlocks. Various national parties took regional character. In the meantime various ethnic, religious and regional movements took place.

Simultaneously, various action-groups and micro-movements came into existence. They were detached from the national politics of parties and elections.

In the late sixties, we also saw large scale unemployment, inflation and poverty. The gap between rich and the poor became larger. Disillusioned with the state of economic and political situation, many university graduates and entrepreneurs left their jobs and went to the countryside to work with the people.

The gap between the middle class and the poor was widened and the division was no longer social or economic but also of cultural and political.

The grassroot stirrings in the shape of action-groups and micro-movements emerged as an alternative to conventional politics. It is at this juncture that the Lokayan was born. Although the activists of Lokayan don't agree to the fact that Lokayan exist in the form of an organisation. From the functioning of it, we strongly feel that it very much exists in the form of an organisation. The purpose of Lokayan is stated in the following lines

Lokayan is an aggregative networking process that operates through dialogues and communications between and amongst activists and intellectuals, at micro and macro levels, drawn from different sectors and ideological positions. It is a non-vanguard, non-territorial, non-party political process that does not pretend to have a readymade framework but seeks to build on the basis of ideas, values and perceptions emerging from the dialogues in which are involved not just the academia but even more the social activists engaged in various movements and representing the mass of the people, especially the deprived and the dispossessed among them (Lokayan Bulletin, pp.8-9)

Lokayan The beginning

In the year 1980, Lokayan started its work in the form of a project under the sponsorship of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies

The activities of Lokayan can be grouped under three titles. They are (1) Dialogue, (2) Research and Documentation, and (3) Debates and Dissemination

(1) Dialogue The dialogue has two aspects i.e., (a) interaction and cooperation among action groups and intellectuals and (b) to bring out a macro-perspectives on the grassroot struggles

It has been realised by the Lokayan activists that the major factors responsible for a dialogue among the activists and the intellectuals are the following:

(1) On the one hand the economic and social planning of the government and on the other hand poverty and destitutions among the millions in the countryside

(11) On the one hand the science and technology policy of the government and on the other hand the basic survival of the people

(111) On the one hand centralisation of power by the government and on the other hand grassroots democratic decentralisation

After considering the gross disparity between the policy of the government and the aspirations of the common people the Lokayan activists feel that a dialogue is necessary in the following fields Political system, social tensions, women's issues, science, technology and power structure, big irrigation projects, forests and ecological balance, education and health and new trade-unionism etc. (Also see Appendix B)

After the areas were demarcated, the first national dialogue meeting was held at Delhi in May 1980 The concerned intellectuals who participated in the meeting were Raj Krishna, Rajni Kothari, D L Seth, Ramashray Roy, Ela Bhatt, Vijay Pratap, Jai Sen, J D Sethi, Suresh Sharma, Giri Deshingkar, Claude Alvares, Fr Kappan, Smitu Kothari, Y D Phadke, Kishore Saint etc

In the National Dialogue meeting, the focus of discussion was (i) to organise local communities to decentralized action in development, and (ii) to organise a dialogue among various activist groups and intellectuals.

On the basis of this meeting, a series of dialogues was organised in various parts of the country. These dialogues were organised with the help of regional centres of social studies. The participants in these dialogues were mainly (i) concerned urban intellectuals, (ii) activists of grassroot struggles and (iii) citizens who are suffering a lot.

(a) Gujarat Dialogues In 1980, two dialogues were organised in Gujarat, one each at Surat and Ahmedabad. These dialogues were initiated with the help of the Centre for Social Studies (CSS) Surat. The participants in the above dialogues were grassroot activists, workers working for the deprived sections of the people, few Sarvodaya organisations and other non-governmental organisations.

The issues to be discussed in the meeting were (i) to highlight the social and economic conflicts that deprive the poor from benefitting. (ii) How to protect the rights of the people displaced due to the construction of Narmada Dam Project. (iii) The problem of land distribution pattern in the villages. (iv) How to link up urban action groups with rural action groups, involved in organizing the poor. (v) The problem of anti-reservation agitation, etc.

From the above discussion, the participants feel that, in order to eliminate rural poverty from the region there is a need to combine struggle (Sangharsh), reconstruction (Rachana) and development (Vikas).

To fight against displacement of people in the Narmada Dam Project, Lokayan activists have extended their co-operation with a local action group called Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini

With the intervention of Lokayan activists, a group called Gujarat Vishamta Nirmulan Parishad (GNVP) a platform for Dalits, Adivasis and minority activists have been formed to fight against anti-reservation in Gujarat

In a way, after a dialogue among many activist groups, the Lokayan could create an atmosphere to fight against injustice

(b) Madhya Pradesh Dialogue In 1982, with the initiative of an activist, a dialogue was organised in Rewa. The main focus of the dialogue was on the issue of the displacement of the people through the setting up of a super thermal project in Singrauli.

The dialogue included the Lokayan activists, local activists and citizens of the area who have been deeply affected by the process. The dialogue resulted in setting up of a group called Lok-Hit Samiti. We shall elaborate its activities in our case study of that organisation.

(c) Bihar Dialogue In 1982, Lokayan activists organised a dialogue in which, action groups cutting across ideological barriers participated. The organisations have different ideological orientations. Like, the Marxist-

Leninists, the Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini, Samajvadi Yuvajana Sabha and Sarvodaya groups etc

The focus of the dialogue was to bring the micro organisations together. And the specific issue that got highlighted was the struggle of Bodh Gaya action groups against the local Mahant's illegal possession of land.

(d) Maharashtra Dialogue Lokayan organised a dialogue in 1980 in a place called Lonavala. The participants varied from politically active intellectuals to grassroot activists. Though the Gujarat Lokayan initiated the dialogue in Maharashtra, the local intellectuals took over it later on.

The issues which were discussed focussed on (i) how to bring a common platform to fight against injustice, (ii) the role of voluntary action as a non-electoral, non-party, political and social action, (iii) to fight against deforestation and displacement of Adivasis.

(e) Andhra Pradesh Dialogue The Andhra Pradesh Dialogue was started in July 1981 at the young India Project, Penukonda. People from various voluntary groups and concerned citizens participated in it. The issues focussed in the dialogue were the following (i) large scale displacement of people due to Srisaillam Dam Project, and (ii) Communal riots in Hyderabad and other places in Andhra Pradesh.

As the displacement of people is taking place in the name of 'development', proper legislation and implementation

of a satisfactory rehabilitation programme was urged

Similar Lokayan dialogues have been organised in Tamil-Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Goa and Kerala. The dialogues seem to be an ongoing process through which the action groups, concern citizens and the Dalits who are fighting for the basic rights could express their grievances against injustice.

(2) Research and Documentation Research and documentation plays an important role in the activities of Lokayan

Lokayan believes in unconventional research it is an attempt to make a qualitative assessment of the grassroot organisations and movements

Types of Research Studies

<u>Type of Study</u>	<u>Name of the Study/ Location</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1 <u>Field Study</u>	Politics of Oppression (U P)	Identification of the interrelationships of crime, corruption, casteism and local politics that is contributing to mass murders of Harijans in U P
2 <u>Field Study</u>	Education (U P)	Focussing on the growing inequality in the educational system arising out of the growing dualism of private and government schools in U P
3 <u>Two Monographs</u>	Development, (Garhwal, U P and Banda, M P)	Negative impact of development schemes on local populations
4 <u>Three Monographs</u>	Ecology	- Displacement due to the construction of dams

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Land-Use patterns and the monopoly of the rich - Problem of the Urban-Slums
5	<u>Three Monographs</u>	Politics of Oppression (Tamil Nadu)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oppression of the Scheduled Castes and the issues of religious conversion - Conflict between Hindu and Christian fishermen
6	<u>One Monograph</u>	Micro level Planning and decentralization (Gujarat)	Involvement of action groups in micro level planning
7	<u>One Monograph</u>	Prohibition of alcohol (Bihar)	Anti-alcohol movements among the tribals of Bihar
8	<u>One Monograph</u>	Bonded Labour (U.P)	The problems of bonded labour

Table No 4

Source: Lokayan Bulletin, (3/6, 1986) pp 42-54

The types of research studies undertaken by Lokayan gives an impression that their emphasis is on contemporary social problems of survival, democracy, decentralization and social change. By focussing on the issues of exploitation, political oppression, social repression, basic survival among the Dalits, displacement in the name of development, bonded labour, corruption and communalism, the Lokayan group tries to create a feeling among the action groups as well as the concerned citizens to fight for their rights.

So far as the 'Documentation' is concerned, two bulletins (one in Hindi and another in English) are published from Delhi Lokayan. These bulletins are bi-monthly.

publications Through these bulletins, various activities of Lokayan are focussed The topics in the bulletin are contributed by intellectuals activists and concerned citizens The issues focussed are communalism, survival, ecology, problems of tribals and Harijans, science and technology, health decentralization, democracy, voluntary action and different struggle notes

The proceedings of different dialogues and meetings are also documented The national meeting on "Non-party Political Process" has come up in a book form Similar monographs have been prepared from the meetings on 'Research Foundation for Science Technology' (Dehradun) and 'Committee for Cultural Choices and Global Futures (Delhi) Recently, with the help of two activists, efforts are on to systematize the documentation

(3) Debates and dissemination The dialogues and research studies have generated a large number of literature which were needed to be debated and disseminated among the intellectuals, activists and the concerned citizens

The literature in the role of dissemination serves the following purposes:

(1) A national consciousness is created by exchanging the ideas of various regions

(11) It carries an on-going debate among the concerned people

(iii) The action groups are provided various research facilities

(iv) The activists after being appraised of the social situation convey them to the common people

Besides dissemination Lokayan also arranges programme through which the activists of one region can share their experience with the activists of another region by spending time with them

Funding in Lokayan

Lokayan as a project started with the help of the Centre for the Study of Social Development, funded by a West German foundation

In December 1982, there was pressure from local activists and coordinators to discontinue the funding, due to some ideological problems. In the national meeting of Lokayan at Ahmedabad in December 1982, it was decided that the funding should be discontinued

With the termination of foreign funding, finance posed a big problem. Then, the phase for 'self sufficiency' began and the major sources of sustenance became the following:

(i) Individual contributions in the form of donations

(ii) Sale of Lokayan bulletins

(iii) Award money from the Right Livelihood Award

Lokayan The Future Course of Action

Lokayan has always acted as a platform through which the intellectuals, activists and the concerned citizens have a continuous dialogue regarding the contemporary social economic, political and cultural issues

At present the main issues before Lokayan which need attention are (i) survival, (ii) communalism and (iii) non-party political process

The question of survival is very important because in the name of development and the practice of modern science and technology, a large number of people are displaced and marginalized

The displacement of tribals in Singrauli, Srisaillam and Narmada Dam Project have caused a lot of problems to the common people Lokayan with the help of the local activists and concerned citizens is trying to create awareness among the people to fight against injustice

The problem of communalism which is posing a threat to the rich cultural diversity of our country is another issue that emerges as a major challenge for the Lokayan activists The situation is grave in places like Hyderabad and Ahmedabad. The Lokayan activists with the help of local activists and concerned citizens are on to form action fronts to fight against it

The Lokayan's third initiative is on the non-party political process. According to this, the activists of Lokayan feel that social movements and grassroots initiatives are the source of accountability of the State to civil society. As we have mentioned earlier Lokayan's efforts have always been to bring a dialogue among the grassroots organisations and fronts to fight against State's repression, the Lokayan activists feel that micro-social movements and grassroots organisations adopting a voluntary, non-party non-governmental form can be more effective in protesting against government action.

This non-party non-government agencies through their grassroots activities can prove to be more effective and can emerge as people's movement. At present these groups on behalf of the struggling masses are playing their role as a part of larger civil liberties effort, through safeguarding the rights of forest dwellers and marginal farmers, protecting the rights of the minorities, against bonded labour, new initiatives in health and consumer protection, against displacement, against centralization and in a sense for the basic survival of the common people.

make a

In this respect we study of Lok-Hit Samiti who, with the Lokayan's initiative is at present working against displacement of the people in Singrauli due to the setting up of Rihand Dam, the Super Thermal Project, and the Coal Mines in the region.

The Singrauli area lies on the border of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh about 130 kilo metres South of Benares. This area was predominantly a tribal area. Kol and Khairwa were the two major tribes who were living there.

The small kingdom of Singrauli has been ruled by the Kols, Khairwas, Chandelas and Balendus. The later two rulers were Rajputs. When the British came, these rulers had the status of tax-payers.

The British found the source of coal reserves in this area in 1847. As a result, the first coal mine was established. Before that, coal was extracted by the local people. When the British government found the source of coal reserves in Bihar and Bengal, they stopped extracting coal from Singrauli as transporting them to Calcutta was a costly affair.

Only thirty years ago, rich and dense tropical forest existed in the Singrauli area. Since this area lies on the highly fertile Gangetic plain, people of this area were self-sufficient in agriculture. In the early sixties, the Rihand Dam Project was taken over by the government. As this created a large reservoir, nearly 146 villages were submerged. This resulted in the displacement of nearly 3,00,000 people from that area. These people got compensation at the rate of Rs. 1 per Bigha, which was not adequate at all.

In subsequent years, huge coal deposits were found in the area. At present, there are nearly eleven open pit coal

mines in the area. The government decided to exploit the close proximity of the coal deposits to the Rihand reservoir and constructed a series of coal fired, water cooled super thermal electric generating plants.

Since 1977 the World Bank has committed nearly \$ 850 million to help finance the development of various projects in the region.

With massive industrialization and development of various projects in the area nearly two to three lakhs of the rural population have been subject to forced relocation. Worst is the case of the poor and the deprived. These people once had villages, better water facility, livestock and fertile agricultural lands. As a result of displacement they have been reduced to a state of destitution. There are many people who have been displaced twice or thrice because of the construction of Rihand Dam, Super Thermal Electric Project under the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and various coal mines under the Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL). At present many of the displaced population live on the edges of the huge projects in the area. As their agricultural subsistence have been destroyed, they are employed as contract labourers in various projects with a meagre wage.

In brief the problems faced by the displaced populations, especially the poor and the destitutes are the following:

(1) The people, who got displaced and rehabilitated by the concerned governments and projects are allotted a land of 60/40 square feet. This land is quite inadequate to accomodate their family members. Previously agriculture was their main occupation and they had a lot of cattle with them. Though they are deprived of their land, still they have not given up the value system attached to them. But, even if they want to keep the cattle with them, they can't, because of the lack of space and shortage of fodder.

(2) The atmosphere of rehabilitated colony is strange to them. There might be similar set of people with them but the environment they had earlier is quite missing.

(3) In the village, value system was such that the landless and the destitutes were well protected. Now these people are found unfit for any job because the new set up needs skilled workers.

(4) Most of the people were dependent on forest wealth. Their basic needs like food, medicine, firewood, etc., were met free of cost from the forests. Now, for any small thing they have to spend money.

Now, there are people who are found unfit for a job in the industrial projects and are deprived of forest wealth due to restrictions on it. This has made their life miserable.

(5) There is no provision of public latrine, in the rehabilitated area. Digging of well, construction of religious

institution and business establishment are also prohibited

(6) There is a provision of giving employment to atleast one member of the family in the projects provided they show that they had one acre or more land in their previous establishment. This provision has deprived many people to get employment in the projects.

There is another problem regarding this. Even if one person of the family gets employment, the income is not sufficient to support all the members of the family. In their earlier set up, the nature of job was such that, everyone was engaged in some work or other.

(7) There are small artisans who have the skills with them, but they are found to be unfit as various projects undergoing in the area need different skills.

They feel that their skills will not be wasted if small-scale industries in the field of pottery, carpentry, etc. are set up.

(8) Even within the population in the rehabilitated area, the interrelationship is severely affected. As for every damn thing money is needed, people are reluctant to help each other due to their short budget. This situation was not there in their earlier set up.

(9) After the relocation, the people got compensation depending upon the quantity of land they lost. In 1980, they were compensated at the rate of Rs 4,500 per acre whereas

according to a High Court decision in 1985, they should have got Rs 12,500 per acre lost

(10) The lands which have been purchased by the NTPC are sold to another company NCL at the rate of Rs 34 000 per acre But when the local people sell it, to any of these projects, they are offered only Rs 7,000/- per acre In other words, the land of the people is purchased by one company at the rate of Rs 7,000/- per acre and is sold to another company in an exorbitant price of Rs 34 000/- per acre

(11) The Corporations and projects in the area spend nearly two percent of their expenditure in public welfare In principle, these amount should be spent on the relocated population However, according to the secretary of Lok-Hit Samiti, a very small percentage of this amount is spent on them Instead, this amount is utilized in organising Meena Bazar by Vanita Samaj, women's Association consisting of wives of top officers

The observations have been made after meeting the displaced populations in the area To understand the topology of the resettlement colonies where the displaced populations are accommodated, we have taken two sample villages for study They are Navjeevan Vihar (M P) and Chilka Daad (U P)

(A) Navjeevan Vihar This resettlement colony consists of populations from nine villages who had to be relocated in 1984 due to the construction of Vindychal Super Thermal Power Ltd , an NTPC project

Nearly seventy five percent of this population have been relocated thrice, first time due to the construction of Rihand Dam, second time due to the construction of Singrauli Super Thermal Corporation (SSTC) and Central Coalfields Ltd (CCL), and now due to the construction of Vindychal Super Thermal Project

The work of occupation of new area and relocation of population comes under Special Authority Development Area (SADA) Navjeevan Vihar colony which has been resettled near Bedhan, comes under the jurisdiction of SADA According to a SADA estimate, the proposed budget for Navjeevan Vihar population is as follows

	<u>Category</u>	<u>Remark</u>
1	The Estimated Displaced Families	1500
2	Total displaced population	7700
3	Total estimated occupied area	37.5 Hectares
4	The estimated budget of compensation at the rate of Rs 10,500 per acre	Rs 9,84,375
5	Estimated budget on area development like street light, water supply, etc.	Rs 56,25,000
Total		Rs 66,09,375

Table No 5

Source. Vikas Ki Kimmat, (Ahmedabad, SETU) p 27

According to the Assistant Collector of Bedhan, who is also chief of SADA, the main problem of relocating the population lies in their cooperation with the government. As it is a massive task, chances against the existence of some sort of flaws is very high.

When asked about the compensation, he said that the displaced people had been adequately compensated. They had been paid at the rate of Rs 10,500 for each lost- one acre of land. They had also been provided with land of 60/40 square feet for construction of houses. The area is only 4 kms away from the power station. This facilitates the people to go to work very easily. There are facilities for electricity both in the street as well as in the houses. They have 12 boring-wells as well. There are also such provisions that if their houses collapse due to some natural calamity, they are adequately compensated.

The Assistant Collector is confident that people will gradually adjust themselves to the new set up. Government is trying their best to look after the welfare of the people.

However, the displaced people of the area have quite a different feeling so far as their accommodation in Navjeevan Vihar is concerned. They are as follows:

(1) They were compensated at the rate of Rs 10,500 per acre, but the same area, if sold to NTPC by SADA, worths Rs 60,000. Therefore the people feel that, they should have been compensated in the latter rate.

(2) Though SADA claims that the facility of water is adequate, people claim that they have to stand in queue for hours together to avail themselves of this primary need. Consequently it becomes extremely difficult for some of the employees to report in time.

(3) The people have to pay an annual tax of Rs 180 as land-tax (Bhu-Bhatak). The people who don't have a regular employment, it becomes extremely difficult on their part to pay the above amount.

(4) The area of 60/40 square feet that is provided for construction of house is quite small. Though they were used to keep cattle and other animals in their previous set up they are unable to think of this now. As family-size is also increasing day by day, it is extremely difficult for them to accommodate.

(5) In the initial stage, the SADA had provided electricity. There is facility for electricity only at the street. There is no sign of expansion in that.

(6) The problem of employment is acute among the youth. They have not been taken for employment in the NTPC and NCL because of their lack of skill.

(7) The SADA has made provisions to provide land for opening up shops in the area at the rate of Rs 10 per square foot. As this was costly for the people, they requested the authority to provide them in Rs 2 per square foot. Their

members Mr Awadesh, Mr Deepak and Mr Ajay The main demands of Lok-Hit Samiti are as follows:

- (i) Proper compensation to the people before displacement
- (ii) One family should not be displaced more than once
- (iii) Provision of employment and training to the affected people
- (iv) The farmers who are cultivating the lands in the area should be provided with legal right over that land.
- (v) Preservation of nature culture, ecology and environment of the area and the inhabitants of the area should have full rights over them
- (vi) Employment facilities for everyone especially the women
- (vii) Setting up of small scale industries to involve women and local artisans
- (viii) Provision of education for children of the affected people
- (ix) Provision of drinking water and medical facilities.
- (x) The nature of industrial set up should be such that the change should be natural
- (xi) To work out properly the limits of development.

The techniques adopted by Lok-Hit Samiti to carry out their activities are as follows:

(i) Public rallies of the displaced people to put forward their demand before the concerned authorities

(ii) Having dialogues with intellectuals, journalists, and other action groups

(iii) Developmental activities like providing education to the children, voluntary medical help, etc

Recently a school is run by the members where students upto 3rd standard are provided education. The strength of student is 84 and four teachers are engaged in teaching at present.

(iv) Legal activities like appeal in the court regarding arbitrary steps taken by the government or other projects

(B) Chilka Daad. Chilka Daad is a village where land is provided to the displaced population by NTPC after Shakti Nagar Power Station was constructed. This was their second displacement as they were already displaced in the sixties after the construction of Rihand Dam. Now they fear further displacement because NCL has found large reserves of coal in that place.

This place comes under Mirzapur district. In terms of area, Mirzapur is the largest district, some parts of Singrauli also lie in this district.

The Shakti Nagar Power Station has started its production and the capacity is 3100 Mega Watt. This project, takes about 5000 acres of land. As a result, nearly 532 houses

and five thousand people got displaced. They were then relocated in Chilka Daad village.

At that time, the people of this area were compensated at the rate of Rs 4,500 per acre of land. According to an NTPC official, adequate steps have been taken so far as the employment of the displaced population in the area is concerned. He also says, the public welfare fund has been utilized to construct a Junior High School in the area.

However, the people bear a different feeling towards the development of the area. They are as follows:

(i) They were compensated at the rate of Rs 4,500 per acre of land. That was in 1980, however, in 1985 the High Court of Madhya Pradesh has given a statement that the amount should have been Rs 12,500 per acre.

(ii) The worst of the fears of the population is their further displacement. A resident of the area tells, "when we were displaced after the Rihand Project, we could bear that sacrifice considering the larger interest of the country. But twenty five years after that incident, we are still at the threat of further displacement. Is there no stop to this process?", He gulps.

(iii) There is only one junior high school in the village, however, the children of the employees who are staying within the campus get facilities for public school education.

(iv) Though the power project generates more than 3000 Mega Watts of electricity, there is no electricity in their village

(v) The ashes and dusts produced from the projects are dumped near the village

(vi) The work is in progress in the nearby coal mines. Sometimes they feel that there is earthquake in their area because of the powerful effect of dynamites

(vii) There is no road to their village. Everyone has to cross nearly three railway lines to go out of the village. Every year some among them become victims of death while crossing the railway lines.

(viii) In case of serious illness or sudden medical help, one has to ^{be} satisfied with the treatment of local doctors who are not even certified. They have to give bribes to get admission into the NTPC hospital.

Udwasit Kisaan Mazdoor Parishad is the sister organisation of Lok-Hit Samiti who is carrying out its activities regarding the problems of displaced populations of the area. Their main demands are:

(1) The provision of giving employment of one person per family should be properly worked out. At present the NTPC has made provision to give employment to those persons who had one or more acres of land in the previous set up. This should be closed as the needy ones are not the people who had land(s) but the landless labourers.

(11) The relocation should be within two kilometers of NTPC premise As there is a provision of spending the public welfare money in the area spread about within two kilometers of the premise

(111) The NCL, Beena has provided 5 acres of land for cultivation to the affected people The same should be introduced in Chilka Daad also

(iv) According to High Court's directives of 1985 the affected people should have been compensated at the rate of Rs 12,500 per acre Therefore, they should be compensated at the present rate

(v) Adequate facilities like school, public latrines, drinking water should be provided

Most important of all, they should not be asked to leave the place again

The techniques applied by Udwasit Kisaan Mazdoor Parishad to make this movement more solidified are as follows.

(1) Setting up of local action group in each village.

(11) Sending memorandum regarding their problems to the authorities

(111) Public meetings and peaceful agitations

(iv) Carrying on dialogues with journalists, intellectuals and other action groups

The above micro-movements are continuing their struggle in the Singrauli area to ask for better civil and democratic rights of the people. The basic question asked in the whole process is "the country has a long term objective of industrial development but what would happen to the people if they are not assured of their basic rights". Being the natives of the area they ^{feel} / they have the right to protect and preserve their own environment.

Chapter VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

With the proliferation of massive social movements like the peace, feminist, ecology and the local-autonomy movements in the West, sociological theories of the classical tradition were felt to be inadequate in explaining these movements. Till then, historical materialism, structural-functionalism and social-psychological tradition of the Chicago School were the dominant theories in explaining social movements. As the social movements of the seventies were not responses to economic crises or breakdown, there was a need to explain these movements from the perspective of concrete goals and well defined values, interests and strategies. This resulted in the development of the "resource-mobilization" paradigm in the United States and the "identity-oriented" paradigm in Western Europe.

The new paradigms seem to be different from the classical theories in the sense that they consider the participants of the social movements to be rational beings and the occurrence of the movements as normal.

The "resource-mobilization" paradigm believes that the social movements get involved in large-scale formal organisations and their formation depends on changes in resources, organisation and opportunities for collective action.

Although the "resource-mobilization" paradigm explains the changes in organisational forms, targets and tactics of

collective action, so far, it seems to have failed to explain the processes through which collective actors create the identities and solidarities they defend. The present study which aims at understanding these processes has, therefore, used the identity-oriented paradigm.

The three-fold objectives of the "identity-oriented" paradigm are to explain the self perception and identity of the actors, the problem of the other against which their self-identity is formed, and the cultural totality that forms the arena of struggle. It is these three aspects that define the very essence of a social movement.

The problem of social movements was a neglected subject in India till the early seventies. Sociological researchers were mainly concerned with the analysis of social structures in preference to that of social processes. The widely favoured topics of research were Caste, Family and Villages. Almost all movements during the freedom struggle can be subsumed under the national liberation movement. Therefore studies in social movements gained impetus only after independence. During the freedom struggle the movements had a clear-cut target of attack on imperialism. However, the absence of such a clear target was felt after independence, which led to the diversification and proliferation of social movements in India.

So far as the existing studies on various social movements in India that have taken place since independence,

very few systematic attempts have been made to tackle the conceptual issues like definition, classification, genesis, ideology and identity, organisation and leadership, internal dynamics and social consequences. A few sociologists like M S A Rao, P T Mukherjee and T K Oommen have made some significant contribution towards removing these inadequacies. However, the above sociologists have mainly concentrated on describing the typology aspect and have not adequately analysed the movements from an actor's own perspective and its cultural totality.

Since the nature of social movements that took place in the seventies appear to be different from the earlier movements, it is desirable to approach them from a different theoretical perspective. Therefore the present study of contemporary social movements in India is a modest attempt to examining it from an alternative paradigm.

If we analyse the post-independence social, economic, political and cultural situations of India, we find that a crisis of national identity was felt by the Indian masses in the late sixties. In the political field the breakdown of old Congress Party resulted in a fragmentation of national politics, thereby giving rise to many regional parties and ethnic and religious movements. In the economic sphere there were large scale unemployment, growing inflation and acute food shortages. Since the country was governed by a cohesive middle-class elite who were the intellectual and

political heirs of colonialism, the policies created by these bureaucratic and technocratic ruling elite was mainly responsible for creating a gap between the established middle classes and the masses

The poor, the deprived and the minorities feel that the programme of 'Garibi Hatao', national self-reliance, planned development, higher technology, etc have made them more marginalized. These feelings were expressed by them in the form of grassroot micro-movements such as the ecology movement, the women's movements, the dalit movements, the movement for civil liberties and democratic rights and various movements of religious and ethnic minorities. They strongly feel that they are not only marginalized, but are facing an identity crisis as well.

Some of the specific features of these movements are that they are detached from the national politics of parties and elections. Their efforts are voluntaristic and they divert their attention from the traditional economic/industrial system to cultural grounds.

The present thesis encompasses within its scope only three of the above described movements: women, ecology and the civil liberties. It is felt that none of these movements is confined to the minorities alone. Rather, they all appear to assume the shape and character of national movements and even reflect global concern.

What seems common to all these three movements is the question of identity, they are all grappling with the problem of identity in their own ways

Women want to demonstrate their own identity in terms of some activities which they feel they can do on their own. In so far as the ecology movements are concerned people are trying to assert their identities with nature, since nature now appears to them as a gradually vanishing aspect of their world. The gradual destruction of nature threatens the survival of the poor and the destitute citizens. Similarly, the assertion of the demand for a civil society articulates people's pressing concern for their identity as the free citizens of a democratic world

When these movements are appreciated in terms of the problem of identity, it seems quite pertinent to embark upon a sociological study of them by adopting an "identity-oriented" paradigm, this is what is undertaken as a methodological procedure in the present study of the women's movements, ecology movements and civil liberties movements. Part of this project has also been, on the one hand to study the goals, interests and strategies of the above movements, and on the other hand to examine the identity of the actor, the definition of the opponent and the very cultural totality that constitutes the field of conflict

The nature of data collected in our study of the above social movements is basically qualitative. However, some

quantitative methods are also applied as a way of complementing the above data. Therefore, a combination of methodologies, or what is otherwise known as a method of triangulation, forms the basis of our data collection. This is done by keeping the following things in mind: (i) Better exposures for cross-validity and reliability of data, (ii) Possibility of counter-balancing strength of one method over another to compensate for the weaknesses of a single method, and (iii) An effort to integrate fieldwork and survey methods.

In general, the methods used for data collection are as follows:

(i) Informal interviews with the organisers and key member-activists of the organisation

(ii) Open-ended interview schedules to understand the inmates' attitude towards the movement

(iii) Observation methods by staying with the members and inmates throughout the field study

(iv) Collection of data from the secondary sources to understand the macro-dimension of the movement

(v) Case studies of the inmates who have benefitted from the action groups

(vi) Informations from the key informants who would like to keep their identity a secret

In the present study, we have tried to discuss the genesis, processes and implications of the contemporary

social movements like the women's movements, ecology movements and civil liberties movements. Our study involves the analysis of three case studies of the action groups who are carrying out these movements.

The problem of women is discussed by taking up a case study on Saheli, an autonomous women organisation, at present carrying out its activities in Delhi. Similarly, the ecology issue is discussed through a case study of Parishara Sanrakshana Kendra (PSK), which is carrying out its activities through Appiko Chaluvali, a grassroot micro-movement in the Uttara Kannada District of Karnataka. The civil liberties effort is discussed through a case study of Lokayan and its action groups called Lok-Hit Samiti and Udwasit Mazdoor Kisan Parishad, situated in Singrauli.

In India, women are considered to be a deprived and discriminated lot. In the 19th century reform movement, issues like raising the age of marriage, abolition of child marriage, widow remarriage, abolition of sati, higher education for girls were taken up as the various means of raising the status of women in society.

Although large number of women participated in the freedom struggle, their activities can be understood as falling under the national liberation movement. The period from 1947 till late sixties was one of complacency among women. But during the period between late sixties and mid seventies when India experienced an economic crisis causing

phenomenal price rise women raised their voice against this critical phenomenon Declaration of the International Women's Year in 1975 and the famous Mathura rape case were the two milestones which occasioned the upsurge of a new set of women's organisations called 'Autonomous Women's Organisations'. The development of autonomous women's organisations is considered to be the real women's movement in India.

The significant features of these women's movements are that women themselves organize and lead the movements. Their main priority is to fight against oppression, exploitation, injustice and discrimination against women.

Saheli is a woman's organisation that came into existence in 1981. At present the activities of Saheli include (i) giving legal and medical aid, employment, training, shelter, etc., to women (ii) Creating social awareness about the status of women (iii) Engaging in research, documentation and dissemination on women's issues (iv) Organising discussions, seminars and workshops on women's issues and (v) Setting up area-based centres which provide similar services.

Apart from the above activities they are at present involved in (i) the creation of public opinion against the ban on NET-EN, an injectable contraceptive, (ii) systematic intervention in the area of unorganized sector, and (iii) survey on domestic violence.

The significant features of this organisation is that membership is open only to woman, though male-help is allowed in many respects. Their efforts are voluntaristic. There is no hierarchy at the organisational level. Majority of the members belong to middle class, though membership is open to everyone. Since the organisation is situated in an urban area, they basically deal with these problems of women which are typical to urban living.

Before the advent of the British in India, there was only customary regulation of people's rights over forest lands and forest produce. However, in 1865 an act was passed to manage and preserve the government forests. Subsequently many acts were passed by which, in the name of development, large scale deforestation took place. The same practice seems to have continued even in the post-independence period.

Due to increased forest exploitation, the forest communities have experienced a progressive loss of control over their habitat. In the seventies, people responded to this threat to their survival by starting off ecological movements in various parts of the country, and made demands for the conservation of vital natural resources.

This movement not only challenges the logic of the relationship between man and nature, it necessitates a re-examination of the relationship between man and his own nature. Here the basic question concerns what place 'nature' has in the constitution and preservation of human life itself.

Inspired by the Chipko Andolan of the Garhwal region, the people of Uttara Kannada launched the 'Appiko', the Kannada version of Chipko. If we search for the reasons why the people are involved in such protests, we find that the British had provided 'betta lands' to the farmers in order to encourage cash crops like black-pepper, cardamum, arecanut, coffee, etc. in that region. And at the same time there was large-scale deforestation to meet the need of wood to construct railways. When the British left, the government adopted the policy of producing more food and planting of selected trees like eucalyptus and teak to meet the growing need for food and fuel, especially in the urban areas. As a result, the local villagers were deprived of their need for the local species of trees which generated fertilizer for cash crops.

The large-scale displacement of people due to the construction of Budthi hydel dam in the region was another reason why the local people ^{became} more ecologically conscious. It is at this point that Mr. Pandurang Hegde came to the scene by forming the Parishara Sanrakshana Kendra (PSK) in Sirsi. The main objectives of the organisation are (i) to save the existing forest cover, (ii) to grow trees of local species, and (iii) to utilize the forest wealth with due care for conservation.

The protests involve the use of the technique of Chipko and satyagraha. In their efforts to mobilize public

opinion, the protesters have adopted traditional art forms like Yakshagana and street plays by the youth. The developmental activities involve in propagation of fuel-efficient Chullahs, alternatives of fuel wood, regulation in the lopping of green leaves and plantation of new saplings which are of local varieties.

Civil and democratic rights movements are a consequence of social, economic and political oppressions as well as human indignities. Phase has given a new dimension to the political and democratic struggle in India. Several civil liberty groups are formed to confront the local power structure. However, in recent years a divergence of perspectives among various civil liberty groups is noticeable. It indicates their move towards a new political activity for the future.

In India, the grassroot initiatives in the form of a non-party political process have shown ways in which this new political programme for the future can be carried out. Their main demand is to create a non-institutional domain where the practices of civil society are accountable. The assertion of the demand for a civil society articulates people's pressing concern for their identity as the free citizens of a democratic world.

Lokayan, as a civil liberty organisation, tries to bring the action groups and micro-movements together in a dialogue with academicians, intellectuals and action groups.

who have equal concern for the struggling masses.

In the year 1980, Lokayan started its work in the form of a project but emerged as a separate group in 1982. Their activities involve

(i) Dialogue, that is interaction and cooperation among action groups and intellectuals

(ii) Research and documentation

(iii) Debates and dissemination

At present the main issues before Lokayan are (i) survival, (ii) communalism and (iii) non-party political process

The Lok-Hit Samiti, an action group started with the initiative of Lokayan, is working against the displacement of the poor and the destitutes due to the construction of Rihand Dam and Super Thermal Corporation in Singrauli region

Our study shows that the theories of classical tradition are inadequate in explaining the genesis, processes and implications of many, if not all, social movements in contemporary India. Therefore a comprehensive theory of these movements need to incorporate the cultural totality and the perspective of the actor's identity. In this respect, a combination of traditional sociological wisdom and the emerging theory of identity-orientation should be welded into a single theoretical system to yield an adequate theory of contemporary social

movements.

The substantive findings of the present study are as follows: firstly the contemporary social movements evolve from the grass-root level and gradually they assume the character of macro-movements. Their efforts are voluntaristic and they are ready to fight without going for a large membership drive. They get together on the basis of collective identity. Secondly, the goals of these movements are diverted from economic/industrial to cultural grounds. This indicates that, in a heterogeneous country like India, struggle evolves on a variety of factors like ethnicity, gender, environmental concern and not on the macro-economic basis of class only. Thirdly, capture of state power is not the ultimate goal of these social movements, rather they at the micro level appeal to the local authorities on the basis of ethical and moral principles and make an attempt to conscientize them. They also involve in dialogues with the intellectuals, journalists and other action groups and concerned citizens at the micro level. Fourthly, the organisations, which spearhead these movements, do not believe in a rigid hierarchy. Their organisational structure is more of horizontal in nature. As these organisations do not have a rigid hierarchy the concept of the leader and the led does not exist. The prominent members of these organisations consider themselves to be organisers rather than leaders. The organisers carry out their activities in a rational universal language. Fifthly,

these movements believe in a non-party political process. Their main objective is to create a non-institutional domain where the practices of civil society are accountable. In this respect, they have detached themselves from national politics of parties and elections. Finally, as these movements are of a recent origin the effectiveness of these movements can't be discussed in definite terms at this point. However, it can be said that the issues they have raised are such that they have a potential for developing into national and global movements.

The present study, seems to have some potential limitations. The present thesis is based on the case study of one of organisation each of the three movements - women, ecology and the civil liberties. Thus the pattern of various types of social movements that are taking place in contemporary India are not adequately represented. In addition, the study could focuss only on some of the aspects of movements. Social movements being a complex and multidimensional social process, there is a need to deal with various other dimensions of the movements. In order to yield a comprehensive knowledge about the nature of the movements in general and the organisations and participants in particular, it requires a lengthy process of participatory action research and a combination of many other types of conceptual and methodological tools. The present study lacks in this aspect due to obvious problems of logistics.

In future, participatory action-research is needed to generate holistic knowledge of the process, of the various types of social movements, their genesis and effectiveness and reciprocity between social movements on the one hand and their social environment on the other. Future research should also concentrate on the interaction between the contemporary social movements and the older types of movements that are occurring at present.

APPENDIX - A

'APPICO' SONGS

This song is composed in "Bhavagita" style The traditional folk art of Karnataka "Yakshagana" is performed by the local artists. The song is as follows.

"Appiko (To Hug)

Composed by -

Mr Mahabaleswar Hegde

and Miss Vijaya Hegde

(Gubbigadde)

Bhamini

Nymph of Forest, Mother of the environment

Greatness of you is an aggrandizement

Bestow us the best of intellect to protect you,

Injured is your body

Pardon us affectionately

We will grow trees with the Slogan

'Hug me', 'hug me', (1)

Saurashtra Tribude

One day a group of youth, got together at a place

And decided to protect the beauty of the forest (2)

Deciding so, they thought of conveying

The message to the people and need not

Waste the time, Or else the deity of forest

would not survive with the blows of destruction (3)

Suruti Eka

Sundara Bahuguna has said with humility
 To protect the forest with unwearied mind
 For the desperate period has come (4)

Greenery itself is the breath of life
 Is what was whispered by Bahuguna with a smile
 For the humans to live, in the lap of
 Vasumati, Let us sow, grow and protect
 The Green (5)

With patience, and tolerance, hug the
 Method of Vahanata
 Proceed with high thinking, as the
 Words of Bahuguna is true (6)

All of us, realising this, should be
 The Watchdogs of the forest
 Treat the Forest as our mother
 For She the accomplished, will stop the
 Shiva's destructive dance (7)

Maravi Eka

Authorities of the Forest Department and
 People have cut the trees, Look
 Our Forest has weakened, why to wait (8)

Panchagati Matte

(These authorities) in connivance with the
 Thieves of forest, do exploit the
 Forest Secretly
 And at last, pronounce that the enemy
 Of the forest is the forest community in a loud voice ' (9)

Maravi Eka

we should not kill the plants and
 Trees sparsely grown
 Lethargy is no good, awake with
 The wise Song (10)

Kedara Gaula Thampe

Varieties of plants and trees in
 The Jungle
 If not exist, the environment will be spoilt
 The earth is being eroded, and where
 Is the chance for survival, if the
 Diseases play havoc (11)

In the forest of Kalase, they have cut
 In the past eight days
 And They have called all of us to go there
 And hug the tree, Listen to this (12)

Kanada Janjūti rūpaka

Look they hav come to the forest,
To feel the trees, So we should go
Today itself to hug the tree (13)

Forest itself is a cause for rain, grain and sustenance
Destruction of the forest is our own destruction
This is our Slogans (14)

Let us request them not to destroy the forest
If it does not reach their mind let us try to tell
Them time and again (15)

If we grow trees, protect it and use them frugally
And if we love them with deep affection,
Then alone it will bear fruit to feed us (16)

Saranga Asta

Listen O th enemy of forest, the wealth
Of For st is our people's backbone
There might b many ways to earn livelihood
The destruction of forest is our Swansong
And it is truth (17)

The Wealth of forest must be protected,
The plants must be grown with utmost sincerity
The protection of the environment is our
Protection, Let us give up our Cruel attitude
And give up the destructive mentality as well (18)

Appiko is an emblem must be agreed upon
 In order that, there might grow an environmental consciousness
 So in the name of Appiko we vow for the same. (19)

Appiko Bhavagita

Come, hug me babe, hug me, In intolerable
 Is the pain of body
 And the agony of mind, can't be expressed
 The heart is cut
 With the butcher's sword
 And axe falling mad on me
 Corroding me,
 Subdued was I with the sorrow of heart
 And cut into pieces was my mind (1)

I was a shelter to birds and animals alike
 Offered the shadow for people without any dislike
 The streaming rivers and brooks were all like the fall of
 the Saree
 Magnificently exhibited and I enjoyed not ordinarily
 And, of course, I wanted to flee with overwhelming glee (2)

Hidden was all the wealth in my womb
 But alas' all being looted O dear son listen '
 All being looted, in the name of smuggling
 They do undress me, all of them do
 Undress me
 Erasing the vermillion
 The symbol of my 'Sowbhagya' of one in million

They enjoy the sadistic pleasure
 These butchers have taken off my cloths
 My own babies try to molest me, Alas !
 Save O my dear Sonny my Green 'Soubhagya'
 And non-widcwhood
 Save my respect from sinners against God
 Oozing is my blood
 Melted is my heart
 No, I can't tolerate
 Listen my dear son listen and come fast
 Come O sister don't ever delay
 Let's go to the forest as quickly as we can
 Let's all go to the forest land
 Stop the murder to our best
 The greencry of our mother is the essence
 of life together
 It is the farmer's life breath
 And the green signal of nation's marching ahead
 The butchers who cut the trees,
 The crazy who make the forest barren
 And the agents who undress their own mother tie
 May they be stopped by us
 Let's hug the trees, Let's not fear the
 Strokes of axe's
 Let our head fall on the earth
 Let the blood flow without death

Come all of you, Come forward come to protect
 The forest, (, our people, our people, our people, our people

Touching the skies, spreading in the space

Creating a pandal to the Universe

Come our people hurry up to protect this green

This green is our breath in every ounce

Green is looted, Trees are exploited

Our forest is all turned into barren land

Come, Let's move fast, Stop the matter at the best

And grow the nation's wealth to progress

The land is becoming barren, gone is

The source of water and rain

The fields of xasants are becoming

Yellow and dry in vain

Nation's wealth is the trees of forests

Marching fast let's protect the Green

Listen to the good words, Listen to our words

If we cut the wood

Hell is guaranteed

If you cut the trees there is bound to be disaster

The erosion of mother earth multiplies

Trees being gone

Production being dwindled

River, brooks, pond and the rest would all be dried

Listen, would all be dried

Trees are our breath
And nation's wealth
Don't forget it and follow these
words with utmost faith
Follow these words with faith
The chopping of trees is like
Chopping of mother's head
We came here to tell you
Not to go to hell
By the stroke and kill
Of your mother and all

APPENDIX B

An Interview With Prof. Rajni Kothari

Q. How did the idea of Lokayan evolve?

RK: We are working on the democratic process in India. Earlier on, the work was mainly based on studying the system. After emergency, it gave us an opportunity to work on a model where we can concentrate on developing an alternative paradigm which could explain the socio-political situation of contemporary India.

In this respect, we made a humble beginning of Lokayan. Later on it developed to a process where a search for a people's oriented society could be evolved.

Q. What is your idea of Lokayan?

RK: Lokayan is not an organisation but a networking process. It is a concept to understand the contemporary social reality by letting the intellectuals, activists and citizens be involved in a dialogue.

Q. What are the main tasks before Lokayan?

RK: Lokayan itself is not an activist organisation but a media of communication to highlight the problem of individual and society. However, there are people who are involved in this process might be activists but Lokayan itself is not an activist organisation.

Q. Do you consider Lokayan to be a movement?

RK: It is an effort of the intellectuals to provide a catalytic role to various people's movements. Lokayan perception about people is also from the perspective of intellectuals. A time has come when a need for an intellectual search to the root of the problem arises.

Q. Recently, the activities of Lokayan has been limited to the issues of communalism, survival and non-party political process; your comment?

RK: The project phase of Lokayan was a phase of experiment. So its activities involved in lot of dialogues and meetings.

Then came the phase of consolidation where the focus was on issue. Our role is to focus on issues which are socio-politically significant from the viewpoint of the common people. Then we try to sensitize so that a local activist organisation takes over.

Q. Does Lokayan commit to any ideology?

RK: We believe in cutting across the various ideologies.

Q. What is your commitment to the issue of Civil Liberty?

RK: Personally, I was involved with the civil liberty organisations. If we consider the civil liberty in a broader sense, Lokayan does take up issues regarding this as they are doing for the displaced in Singrauli.

Q Is Lokayan an outcome of emergency?

RK It is not a direct outcome of emergency but the intellectual group started thinking about such a concept during that time

Q What is your comment on the type of social movements that are occurring in the West?

RK. They are much more stronger and has a large base. The advantage with them is that they have more access to the state. In India, so much of importance is given to the state that we have not been able to develop any movement outside the state. But the situation is now changing here

Q. What is your comment on the role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)?

RK: There are two types of NGOs that are operating in India, one is fully supported by the government and the other, the struggle-oriented groups. The struggle-oriented NGOs believe in a non-party political process. It is these groups who are involved in the grass-root micro-movements

Q What is your comment on the future of Lokayan?

RK: In future, they should try to reach as much people in the grassroots as possible and make efforts to prevent the people from being further marginalized.

RK: I am quite optimistic so far as the future of Lokayan is concerned, because we are involved in broad-based dialogues

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